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Near East/South Asia Report

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EXTENT, RELIEF OF ARAB INDEBTEDNESS EXPLORED

Amman AL-YARMUK in Arabic No 18, 1987 pp 40-45

[Article by Dr Hamid al-Qaysi: "The Aggravated Problem of Arab Indebtedness Abroad"]

[Text] The Arab economy, like many economies of the world's developing areas, is suffering from some of the focal points and characteristics of economic backwardness, and this has driven it to succumb to the problem of foreign debts. One of the reasons for Arab economic backwardness is the dominance of Arab gross domestic product by primary sector activities, the group of activities which consists of the production of primary materials for the industrial extraction sector and agricultural products. This has made the Arab economy a single-source economy in its income formation, or one dependent on a single source for income, disbursements and exports. Since this income has consisted of a primary material, such as oil in the case of the Arab nation, the Arab countries' economies have come to occupy a position of subordination to foreign industrial economies, which use this resource as a source of energy. The demand for oil, same as other primary materials, is directly connected to demand for the industrial commodities they require and to economic activities in the industrial countries which need a source of energy to run the engine of their activities. Because of this, any economic relapse or recession which occurs in the advanced countries will be reflected on the economies which produce primary materials; in the case of the Arab economy it will be reflected on demand for oil and on oil revenues. This will produce negative effects on local economic development activities and the payment of import bills for consumer and industrial goods, and will lead to the emergence of a deficit in economic development revenues and this economy's balance of payments. On the basis of the foregoing, the appearance of recent new developments in the world economy, especially in the economies of the advanced industrial countries, embodied in the advent of recession in these countries since the beginning of the decade of the eighties, the maturation of energy conservation policies, with the guidance of energy consumption they include, and the encouragement of the use of alternatives to oil, which have caused the world oil market to be "in glut," so that demand for Arab oil has declined and its prices have deteriorated as a consequence -- all this has led to a decline in the "economic surpluses" of the Arab economy in general and particularly in oil countries

and countries which rely on them in order to obtain their citizens' remittances from abroad and gifts and financial aid. This sort of development has had negative effects on these countries' ability to defray their balance of payments deficits and provide the financing necessary for their development plans, which are aimed at raising the performance level of the domestic economy and developing its economic resources to provide basic goods and services for their citizens. The domination of the Arab economy by primary sector activities means, among other things, a weakness in the role of the transformation industries which produce manufactured goods to satisfy local needs or export them, in addition to a high level in the share of the contribution the unskilled services sector makes to the Arab economy. All this has led to the narrowing of the commodity sectors, which has prompted the Arab countries to turn to foreign countries to obtain the goods and services they need, and this as a consequence has led to a deficit in these countries' trade balances or, more clearly, to a drop in the value of exports in most of these countries below the value of the goods and services they import. This requires that that be covered by financial resources from some source in order to eliminate this sort of deficit, and this will be reflected on these countries' balance of payments as well.

All these elements have interacted on the stage of the Arab economy, which is also characterized by its obvious consumer orientation in its private and public segments -- an orientation which has been represented by the consumption of goods for luxury and display or appearance in a manner which is not in keeping with the Arab economic resources that are available. This sort of consumer orientation has deepened the need for reliance on imports from abroad to satisfy the citizens' need for consumer goods, especially in the context of the increase in the population and the agricultural sector's inability to provide the food required. It is useful, in this context, for us to point out that the Arab world imports large quantities of food whose value in 1985 came to about \$25 billion, while the rates of growth of the Arab agricultural sector did not expand to exceed the rate of increase in demand for food products. To these factors and causes one should add the inequality in the distribution of economic resources and financial resources among Arab countries, which has resulted in a failure to develop these economic resources and a failure to invest Arab "financial surpluses" in an upright manner.

This sort of fact has given an enduring quality to backwardness in the Arab economy and deepened its subordination to the advanced foreign economies. This sort of subordination has become apparent in the Arab nation's reliance on foreign sources to meet its demand for the goods and money required to carry out some development plans and defray the deficit in the balance of payments, and this has contributed to the increase in the need for foreign loans.

The volume of foreign debts has not accounted for the only burden on the Arab world's indebtedness to foreigners. Indeed, that has been accompanied by the service of these debts as well. Debt service consists of the installments which must be paid and interest on existing loans. As a result of the rise in the rates of interest in the rich loan-granting world on debts, because of the great monetary inflation in them and because of the rise in

the ratio of the private sources the loans encompass to total Arab foreign debts, the sums the Arab debtor countries pay have become a heavy burden on their economies, and that has prompted some of them to declare their inability to fulfill their commitments toward the creditor entities. Here it is necessary to point out that loans granted by private sources incur greater interest than the rates of interest on the loans granted by official and international sources. The payment period for private loans is also shorter than for official and international loans, which has caused the world to confer upon the latter the designation "easy-term loans." The debtor countries' inability to repay the foreign debts they owe has prompted them to resort to what is called "debt scheduling," that is, secondary borrowing at additional interest rates so that they will be able to pay the instalments and interest they owe. All that has driven the Arab countries to further foreign loans, which consequently has led to the aggravation of the problem of Arab indebtedness.

The Volume of Arab Indebtedness

The Arab world's debts came to \$110 billion at the end of 1985. The share of those financed by Arab sources came to 13 percent, while the debts financed by foreign private, government and international sources came to 87 percent. Thus Arab foreign indebtedness comes to close to \$100 billion. The volume of these debts doubled in a short period of time, since they were around \$50 billion in 1980. One should bear in mind that these do not include the military debts arising from the procurement of arms from foreign sources. The statistical data available indicates that Iraq, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and the Sudan head the Arab countries which have large volumes of indebtedness, followed by Tunisia, Syria, the Yemen Arab Republic and Jordan. The statistics show that at the end of 1985 Egypt's indebtedness came to \$23 billion, while Morocco's debts came to \$15 billion and those of Algeria to \$13 billion and the Sudan \$9 billion. The other Arab countries are less indebted, as is apparent from the accompanying tables.

In order for us to evaluate the effect of the burden of these debts on the Arab economy in general and on the economies of the Arab countries separately, we must compare them in light of the main economic indices, such as gross domestic product, exports receipts, balances of international reserves owned by these countries and other indices. Such a comparison will shed light on the extent of the Arab debtor countries' ability to pay the foreign debts they owe and the extent of the effect of these debts on the total amounts available for economic development in these countries or the satisfaction of other local needs. The foreign debts in Arab debtor countries in the period 1980-84 came to 52.4 percent of their total gross national product in this period, 233.4 percent of these countries' export receipts from goods and services and 51.2 percent of the reserves owned by them in the form of gold, foreign currencies and other acknowledged forms of reserves. It is to be noted that such percentages are to be considered high in comparison with their equivalents in the non-Arab developing countries. The ratio of foreign debts to gross domestic product in the developing countries in the same time period has been estimated at about 30 percent and the ratio to exports receipts from goods and services equals 150 percent and to international reserve balances about 24 percent.

As regards the amounts paid to service foreign debts, these in 1984 totalled an amount equal to \$12 billion, a greater sum than that the Arab debtor countries paid in 1983 and 1984, when the amounts paid were \$10 billion and \$9 billion respectively. These sums defrayed were not a minor burden on the economies of the Arab debtor countries, since their share came to 4.5 percent of these countries' gross domestic product in the period 1980-84 and 17 percent of their receipts from the export of goods and services. Suffice it for us to point out in this regard that the sums paid to cover the interest on debts payable came to 5.6 percent of export receipts. It is noteworthy that debt service amounts accounted for 5 percent of the debts drawn out in 1980 but increased constantly until in 1984 they came to 60 percent of the loans drawn out that year. Put more clearly, more than half the loans drawn out in 1984 were allocated to the payment of foreign debt service commitments. As we noted above, the recourse to private sources has increased the burden of the amounts for servicing Arab debts to foreigners.

In view of the conditions surrounding the financial circumstances by which the international loan market was characterized in the first years of the decade of the eighties, especially the difficult conditions the International Monetary Fund stipulated when granting loans to countries which needed them, the Arab countries resorted to private sources to ensure acquisition of the required loans. Private foreign sources' share of the financing of loans to Arab countries came to 37 percent, a high ratio, while international and foreign official sources' share was around 50 percent and that of Arab official sources 13 percent. However, the foreign sources' share was clearly at variance from this in some Arab debtor countries. While this share in Algeria was 73.2 percent in 1973, it increased in 1983, totalling 78.5 percent, in Morocco it rose from 18.2 percent in 1973 to 37.6 percent in 1983, and in Tunisia it increased to total 26.5 percent in 1983, having been 19.3 percent in 1973. Private sources' share in the Sudan comes to 25.8 percent at the present time, which is greater than its level in 1973, when it came to 17.4 percent.

Recommendations for Remedying the Problem

The problem of Arab indebtedness to foreign countries has led it to occupy a position which is of no lower a level than the other pressing economic problems. The initial premise in dealing with Arab indebtedness is concentrated on the need to raise the performance level of the Arab economy in an independent manner, through self-reliance. Independent Arab development requires a number of measures and tasks. In the forefront of these comes the need to form a clear vision of the requirements of this development and consequently the execution of the required measures with full attention and dedication. The measures that are required to this end include the effort to eliminate economic subordination to the advanced countries, with all the meaning the word subordination contains. Economic subordination will be ended only by making the economic policy of each Arab country correspond to common national interests. Entering into this heading is the need for the placing of limits on the excessive spending of Arab economic resources resulting from the failure to exploit these resources in an upright manner, repression of the tendency toward consumption among Arab citizens, joint Arab cooperation among Arab countries on the one hand and between them and the developing

countries on the other, especially in the development of technology, increase in trade and facilitation of the movement of the elements of production. In addition to that, cooperation with these countries is necessary in order to realize a new international economic order which will be characterized by equality and parity in international dealings between the developing countries and the economically advanced ones.

There are many tasks and measures which must be relied on to uplift the Arab economy and make it more independent and reliant on its intrinsic resources, although room will not permit their enumeration. However, it is necessary to stress that reliance on available Arab economic resources is the only means one can rely on to get rid of foreign indebtedness and guarantee that no need exists to resort to it to finance the economic development process and deal with disruptions in the balance of payments.

Table One: Foreign Debts of Arab Countries (Millions of Dollars)

Country	1979	1981	1982	1984	1985
Iraq	--	10.3	10.0	30.0	35.0
Egypt	11.0	14.0	15.5	21.0	22.8
Morocco	6.0	8.0	9.0	13.5	15.0
The Sudan	4.0	4.6	5.2	8.0	9.0
Tunisia	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.5	4.0
Algeria	16.0	15.3	13.8	13.3	13.4
Jordan	1.0	1.4	1.69	2.3	2.9
Syria	3.4	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.6
North Yemen	.47	1.117	1.312	2.0	2.45
Oman	.633	.534	.73	1.4	1.85
South Yemen	.403	.766	.994	1.619	2.18
Somalia	.597	.927	1.078	1.6	1.9
Mauritania	.619	.827	1.171	1.3	1.61
Bahrain	--	--	--	.55	.55

Source: Secretariat General of the League of Arab States and others, Consolidated Arab Economic Report for the Years 1982, 1983, 1984.

Dr Adib Haddad, Foreign Indebtedness of the Arab Countries and its Effect on the Balance of Payments, research work for the symposium on the foreign indebtedness of the Arab countries, Amman, Jordan, 23-24 April 1986.

Table Two: Ratios of Foreign Debt among Arab Countries, by Sources

Country	Easy-Term Development Loans from International Sources	Easy-Term Development Loans from Arab Sources	Loans and Re-mittances from Private Sources	Total
Algeria	19.5	3.1	77.4	100
Iraq	44.3	13.2	42.5	100
Arab Quasi-Oil Countries	21.2	3.8	75.0	100
Egypt	76.0	4.0	19.3	100
Jordan	41.4	47.3	11.3	100
Lebanon	43.3	31.7	25.0	100
Morocco	46.3	10.0	43.7	100
Oman	3.7	31.3	65.0	100
Syria	84.0	12.4	3.6	100
Tunisia	59.5	20.3	20.2	100
Total, Arab Developing Countries	62.3	12.2	25.5	100
Djibouti	--	92.8	7.2	100
Mauritania	47.1	45.5	7.4	100
North Yemen	51.0	47.8	1.2	100
South Yemen	61.9	38.1	--	100
Somalia	57.6	37.9	4.5	100
The Sudan	63.2	14.5	22.3	100
Arab Nation	51.0	13.0	36.0	100

Source: 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Ruq'ali, Problem of the Foreign Debts of the Arab Countries and Points of Departure for Confronting It, research work presented to the symposium on foreign indebtedness of the Arab countries, Amman, Jordan, 23-24 April 1986.

Table Three: Total Debt Service (Installments Plus Interest) in the Arab Nation, 1973-1983 (Millions of Dollars)

Country	1973	1980	1981	1982	1983	Annual Growth Rate, Percent, 1973-83
Algeria	299.7	3,849.0	3,817.6	4,261.0	4,945.1	32.4
Jordan	11.4	133.0	199.0	193.0	213.0	34.1
Tunisia	88.5	431.0	517.5	485.5	598.1	21.0
Syria	46.9	374.0	362.0	373.0	396.4	23.8
Oman	--	254.0	145.0	117.7	143.1	17.4
Lebanon	11.1	12.5	53.5	63.6	--	--
Egypt	570.7	1,417.0	1,903.0	1,877.8	2,465.9	15.7
Morocco	129.0	1,191.0	1,284.0	1,334.0	1,120.0	24.1
Djibouti	--	3.1	3.7	3.4	--	--
The Sudan	56.3	95.7	142.1	118.6	144.4	9.9
Somalia	4.8	8.9	47.0	20.4	22.1	16.5
Mauritania	12.9	30.0	54.0	40.0	36.7	11.0
North Yemen	6.9	22.0	64.0	55.0	42.1	19.8
South Yemen	--	13.0	37.4	35.4	45.7	52.0
Grand Total	1,238.2	3,834.2	8,629.8	8,978.4	10,172.7	23.4

Source: Secretariat General of the League of Arab States and others, Consolidated Arab Economic Report for the Years 1982, 1983 and 1984.

Dr Munir Hamarinah, The Effect of Foreign Indebtedness on Development in the Arab Countries, research work presented to the symposium on the foreign indebtedness of Arab countries, Amman, Jordan, 23-24 April 1986.

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Secretariat General of the League of Arab States and others, Consolidated Arab Economic Report for the Years 1982, 1983 and 1984, Dubayy Press, United Arab Emirates.

Secretariat General of the Council of Arab Economic Unity, Most important Indices of the Foreign Indebtedness of Arab and Developing Countries, Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1986.

Dr Adib Haddad, The Foreign Indebtedness of Arab Countries and its Effect on the Balance of Payments, from the research works of the symposium on the foreign indebtedness of Arab countries, Amman, Jordan, 23-24 April 1986.

Dr Munir Hamarinah, The Effect of Foreign Indebtedness on Development in the Arab Countries, from the research works of the symposium on the foreign indebtedness of Arab countries referred to above.

Source: 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Ruq'ali, Problem of the Foreign Debts of the Arab Countries and Points of Departure for Confronting It, from the research works of the symposium on the foreign indebtedness of the Arab countries referred to above.

Secretariat General of the Council of Economic Unity, annual reports of the secretary general for the years 1983, 1984, 1985, Amman, Jordan.

The Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, annual reports of the secretary general of the organization for the years 1983, 1984, Kuwait.

11887

CSO: 4404/310

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

GULF BANKS UNAFFECTED BY DECLINE IN OIL PRODUCTION

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 21-27 Mar 87 pp 36, 37

[Text] The banks in the Gulf Cooperation Council states realized profits of \$694.6 million for their 1985 operations, according to a special report prepared by the Research Unit of the Institute for Banking Studies in Kuwait. Banking profits were distributed among the Council countries as follows:

--Saudi Arabia	\$244 million
--Bahrain	\$234.9 million
--United Arab Emirates	\$ 44.7 million
--Qatar	\$ 33.5 million
--Kuwait	\$124.7 million
--Oman	\$ 12.8 million

In the same year the Gulf banks paid dividends of \$350.4 million, showing a decline of 6 percent from the previous year.

The Saudi National Commercial Bank headed the rest of the Gulf banks in 1985 in asset base, deposits, and loans, while Riyadh Bank won first place in profits. The National Omani Bank came in first in dividend payout on shares at 22 percent.

The report ranked the first ten banks in the region from the standpoint of asset base as follows:

1. National Commercial Bank (Saudi Arabia)
2. The Arab Financial Organization (Bahrain)
3. National Bank of Kuwait (Kuwait)
4. Riyadh Bank (Saudi Arabia)
5. Gulf International Bank (Bahrain)
6. The Gulf Bank (Kuwait)
7. Commercial Bank of Kuwait (Kuwait)
8. National Bank of Abu Dhabi (UAE)
9. The National Bank of Kuwait (Kuwait)
10. National Bank of Dubai (UAE)

The average growth of the banks of the Gulf Cooperation Council states during 1985 was 1.7 percent, while the asset base was \$121.8 billion. The Saudi share was the largest of these (\$36.4 billion), followed by Kuwait (\$36.4 billion), then Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman.

The report indicates that the total operations of the Gulf banks over the regular instruments was \$41.9 billion, and the regular assets increased an average of 7 percent. The report also showed that in 1985 the financial sector in the Gulf countries retained 14.5 percent of its total assets in the form of liquid assets, 45 percent in loans and credit facilities, and 36.5 percent in deposits and investments. The banks invested 87.5 percent of the funds on deposit.

The ratio of indebtedness remained steady at 90 percent for these banks in 1984 and 1985. The return on assets was 50 percent, and the earnings per share was 6.3 percent. That is a result of the pressures faced by the banks due to the decline in oil prices, the pressure of government expenditure, economic stagnation, and the great allowances set up to counteract bad debts.

In ranking the top three banks from the standpoint of profitability, the classification was as follows:

1. Riyadh Bank (\$142.1 million)
2. The Arab Financial Institution (\$109 million)
3. Dubai National Bank (\$102.1 million)

In dividend payout the ranking was as follows:

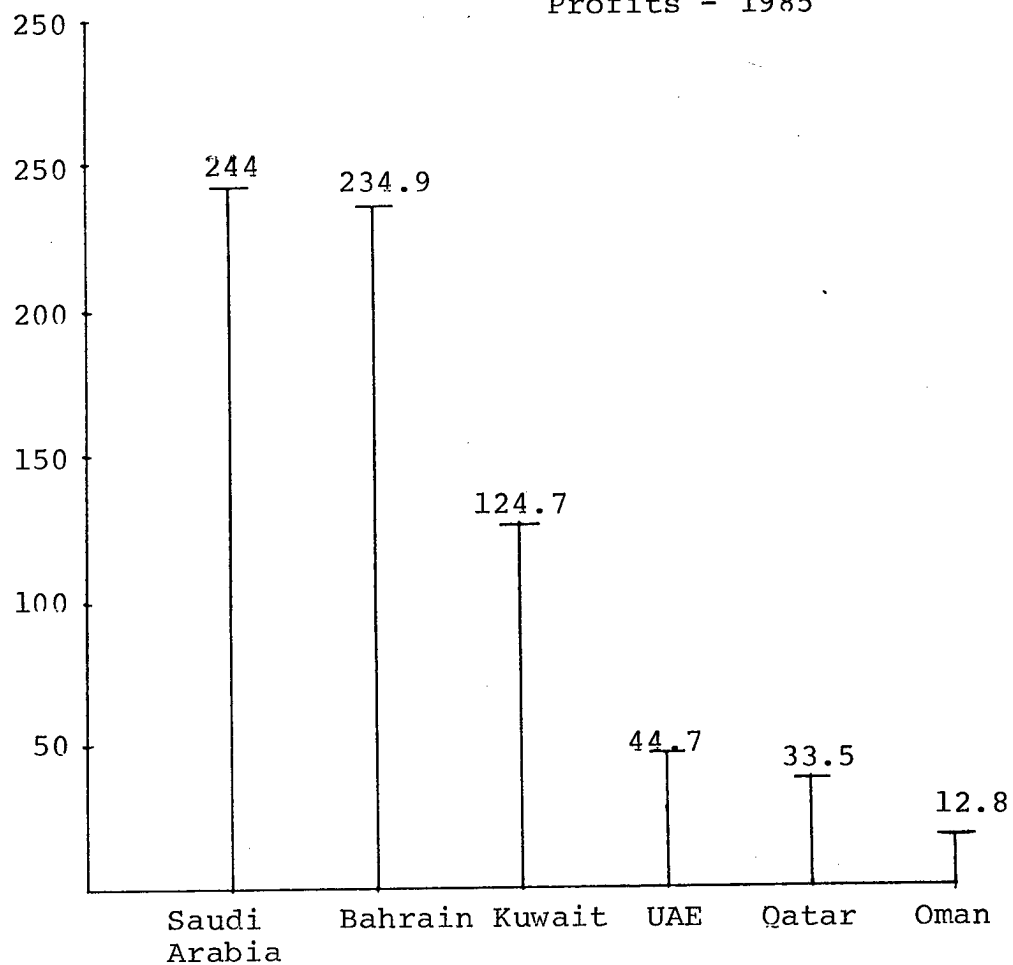
1. National Bank of Oman Ltd. (22 percent)
2. National Bank of Dubai, Ltd. (18.1 percent)
3. Bank of Doha (17.3 percent)

The banks that suffered losses during 1985 were the Commercial Bank of Abu Dhabi, the Middle East Bank, and the United Saudi Commercial Bank.

The study included 40 principal banks in the Council countries, each of which had at least \$250 million in assets.

(Net Profit
in US\$ Millions)

Gulf Country Bank
Profits - 1985



13013/8309
CSO: 4404/278

BRIEFS

POTASH OUTPUT MARKETING--The board of directors of the Arab Potash Company has approved an agreement for a loan with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development worth \$12 million with the goal of raising the potash works' productive capacity to 1.4 million tons in 1989-90. The board has also agreed to a secondary loan agreement with the Jordanian government worth 14 million Jordanian dinars representing the amounts due the government from the company from previous years. The Arab Potash Company works' output in 1986 came to 1,103,000 tons of potash. This quantity represents 92 percent of the design capacity of the project and an increase of 21 percent above 1985 production, which came to 908,000 tons. The volume which was marketed in 1986 came to 1,123,000 tons. The increase over this year's production, which has been marketed in full, has occurred as a result of the marketing of quantities of potash passed on from 1985. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 7-13 Mar 87 p 35] 11887

CSO: 4404/299

MUSTAFA AMIN EXPRESSES VIEWS ON EGYPT-ARAB RIFT

Tunis AL-ANWAR AL-TUNISIYAH in Arabic 15 Mar 87 p 13

[Article by Mustafa Amin: "Who Returns to Whom? There Can Be No Arab Unity Without Freedom of the Press"]

Faysal al-Ba'tut; [Box, p 13] In Egypt, some pyramids still stand in defiance of mediocrity. A generation still breathes, unstrangled by Arab defeat. This is typified by Mustafa Amin, the dean of Arab press. I met him for the first time two years ago. Then I met him again and requested that he write for readers of AL-ANWAR on bridging the Arab gap. He wrote another gem.

[Text] I am not deluded and will not concede that there is a dispute between Arab peoples and the people of Egypt.

The dispute is superficial. The conflict between governments should never extend to the people.

Before talking about the "return" and engaging in the childish game of who returns to whom, let me proclaim emphatically that there can be no Arab solidarity without freedom of the press.

The day that the Arab press enjoys total freedom and discards its fetters is the day when conflicts among the Arabs will cease.

For example, if Egypt's AKHBAR AL-YAWM were to attack Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhfafi, he would automatically assume that President Husni Mubarak was behind that article. Arab rulers [share in the belief] that all Arab papers are controlled by their rulers and speak for them.

Conversely, an attack by a French newspaper on President Reagan would not create a Franco-American conflict. The matter would remain between Reagan and that particular newspaper, no other.

Clearly, differences between our governments exist for that reason. They fight because of an article that appears in a newspaper!

Let me get back to the issue of "return." It would be an honor for me, as an Egyptian, if Egypt returned to the Arab fold because this would not demean it or bring it shame. By the same token, no shame or dishonor will befall the Arabs if they returned to Egypt.

How strange.. We have come to prefer children's games--who will make up with whom. We have quarreled like children and we are now asking, exactly like children, who will return to whom?

The meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev was not preceded by a question on who would take the first step. These two are not any more mature than we are.

How strange. It was very easy for Gorbachev and Reagan to hold their summit but the Arabs could not even agree to hold one!

Gentlemen! Why do you frustrate the will of the people?

I am absolutely certain that the Egyptian is met with open arms wherever he goes, even during the period of the worst conflict between Egypt and the rest of Arab governments.

I am also absolutely certain that any Arab is met with open arms in Egypt, even at the height of that crisis.

Why do you kill love, gentlemen?

Is Camp David the pretext? the "Camp" meant liberating one third of Egyptian territory, which was actually accomplished.

Let those who denounced "camp" tell us. Were they able to liberate the Golan? Gaza? Did they liberate Palestine?

Did diatribe and insults enable them to regain usurped Arab lands?

Was Egypt to stand idly by while its territory was shrinking by the inch and make up for it by watching its mouth get bigger by the day?

Did Egypt ever ask the Arabs to join the "Camp" wagon?

Those who claim that Arab headaches are caused by Camp David are merely deceiving the Arab people. The Arab structure was already cracked even before Sadat went to Jerusalem.

The Arabs were never in agreement except for the October victory, then they were torn apart. Egypt felt that its back alone was being broken under the heavy burden. Its budget was in the red and the Arabs should have helped but they did not, despite the high petroleum profits at the time.

That is when Egypt found itself with no alternative but the "Camp."

I never approved of peace in that fashion. I never approved of making peace with my neighbor at the expense of my relationship with my brethren but that, unfortunately, is what happened!

When the boycott was implemented all Arab lands were attacked. If Egypt were there, Iran would not have dared threaten the Arab gulf.

If Egypt were there, people would not have slaughtered each other in Lebanon.

If the Arabs had remained with Egypt, we would not have all turned into lightweights or zeros.

Without unity, all the Arabs are not worth a speck of dust even though they used to be the sixth power in the world as a result of the October war.

We are now lost, blown by the wind. We have been thrown away and have come to enjoy living in the wastebasket. How !!

Even Afghanistan was devoured by the Russian bear when the Arabs began enjoying life in the wastebasket!

Finally, I would like to say that certain foreign powers are working day and night against Arab unity.

I ask the wise: Should we serve the interests of those powers? Would it not be better for us to implement the will of our peoples?

I ask the wise at a time when the wise are rare!

12945/12951

CSO: 4504/177

EGYPT

AMBASSADOR TO SUDAN INTERVIEWED

Khartoum AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 21 Mar 87 p 5

[Interview with Mr Husayn 'Abbas Musharrafah, Egypt's ambassador to Sudan: "Egyptian Ambassador to Khartoum Says. 'The Time Has Come for Sudan and Egypt To Establish Joint Agricultural Projects; The Pact Emphasized the Practical Side, and We Can Overcome Barriers with Our Capabilities; Al-Damazin Agricultural Project Has Been a Successful Experiment; It Is One of the Positive Aspects of Integration';" in Khartoum; date of interview not specified]

[Text] The two peoples of the Nile Valley, in Sudan and in Egypt, have started a new chapter in their quest for fraternity and a common destiny. Relations between them have shifted away from the steps they took together toward national integration which did not involve the masses. They are now moving toward a total, close fraternal union. The Sudanese and the Egyptian peoples want to reformulate the ancient civilization whose roots go back very far in history.

We conducted this interview with His Excellency Husayn 'Abbas Musharrafah, the Egyptian ambassador to Khartoum. to clarify all the facts and answer all the questions that are being asked about the new beginning of the quest which the two peoples of the Nile Valley have embarked upon. This interview was conducted with the candor which is customary among brothers.

[Question] Is there any difference between the Fraternity Pact and integration?

[Answer] Actually, the power of the Fraternity Pact does not stem from the words which make up its parts as much as it stems from the spirit and will to move ahead forcefully on joint cooperation in all areas so that ultimately the benefit of both peoples can be achieved. We want to achieve prosperity, and we want to be able to provide the numerous goods that people need and that we may have to import from abroad.

The time has come to establish joint agricultural projects, and it is time to expand the cultivation of wheat in Sudan, for example. to meet Egypt's needs. It is also time for Egypt to expand its cultivation of rice; it is time to establish meat and feed producing projects in Sudan. Egypt can thus concentrate on producing other crops which Sudan needs instead of using up one third of its agricultural crops to feed animals.

The pact has been drafted in language which can be interpreted in various ways by the Egyptians and the Sudanese. The special nature of the relationship between the two countries and the basic elements of that relationship constitute the foundations of these interpretations.

[Question] How can the pact convey common concepts? What are your expectations for the Egyptian-Sudanese role in the context of the pact?

[Answer] The special nature of the relationship between these two countries distinguishes them from the relations they have with any other country. This special relationship is manifested in constant elements that both countries have: they share the same religion, history, struggle, culture and blood. The two nations also share the source of life, and they have the same affiliation with basic circles which control their foreign actions and shape the assumptions they make in formulating their international relations. This includes Arab, African, Islamic and non-aligned circles.

The common view which was reflected by the pact is that of concentrating on the practical side. It has been established to all of us that the ties we have can never be broken. This is the practical side of the pact which has to serve both peoples in a manner that would make them both rely on their own and each other's abilities to become self-sufficient in food. There is no doubt that if our abilities were put to the best possible use, we would be able to overcome the barriers of the situation we are in now.

It is necessary that we benefit from the agricultural and technological experience we have and from the land and labor which are available to us. In addition, we have to take advantage of the liquid funds which are available through the savings of expatriate Egyptians. We have to utilize these resources in implementing joint projects in Egypt or in Sudan, and that has to be done in such a way that project outlays are compatible with project returns. I can say that this concept now exists at the Cairo meetings, and there is an understanding on both sides.

[Question] It has been noticed that you met with ministers upon your return from Cairo. What was the purpose of that visit?

[Answer] I met with the ministers to find out what each one of them thinks about putting this pact into action in his area of jurisdiction. I met with them so that both sides can have a clear idea of what can be discussed at future meetings. The other point had to do with the tools of coordination and follow-up between the two countries. It is important that this document become a plan of action in which objectives are defined. There is no doubt that the formation of a supreme committee whose first meeting was chaired by the prime ministers of both countries [will be useful]. This committee will meet periodically every 6 months, and meetings will be held alternately between the two capitals unless emergency conditions require that a meeting be held on an urgent basis.

[Question] Mr Ambassador, you have experienced both the integration effort and the pact. What in your opinion are the drawbacks of integration?

[Answer] There are positive and negative qualities in every experience. It is important to emphasize the positive qualities so we can make them grow, and it is important to deal with the negative qualities so we can avoid them at any future stage. There is an Egyptian-Sudanese agricultural project in al-Damazin, for example, which is considered a success. After Mr 'Umar Nur al-Da'im, minister of agriculture, visited that project, he became enthusiastic about it and he considered it a good example of cooperation between the two countries. This project played quite a role in building up the area of al-Damazin, which is now attracting investments in agriculture. This project includes land improvement centers and vast areas of land for cultivating sunflowers, soy beans, cotton and corn.

The project was established to meet some of the needs that both countries have. Last year Egypt imported cotton from this project for the first time, and this year it intends to import corn.

[Question] Feasibility studies for other projects are still being conducted, and there are projects which are still being implemented. What will become of these projects now that integration has been abolished?

[Answer] It is true that studies for some projects have been completed, but it is important that these projects be reviewed so that priorities can be set for what is appropriate for implementation at the present time. It is important that scientific and academic efforts made by Egyptian and Sudanese experts not be foiled. Ultimately, achieving that which is suitable for the interests of both peoples will be up to both parties. There is, for example, the (Kaderu) meat production project; there is the Blue Nile project; there is a cement production project; and there are other projects in the south which we hope will be implemented.

[Question] Can the ambassador talk to us about developments in Egypt's mediation efforts between Sudan and Ethiopia?

[Answer] Egypt's efforts to bring about an agreement between Sudan and Ethiopia are still continuing. Egypt enjoys the confidence of both parties. When Ethiopia's minister of foreign affairs was visiting Cairo, it was agreed that dialogue between the Ethiopians and the Sudanese continue. In addition, Egypt made contacts while the African ministers' conference was in session in Addis Ababa to push the subject of dialogue between Sudan and Ethiopia forward. Egypt will not hesitate to make any effort in that regard as long as it contributes to the area's stability and helps bring good things to the fraternal country of Sudan.

[Question] What has been done on the labor protocol between Sudan and Egypt?

[Answer] The purpose of the protocol is to coordinate employment between the two countries and preserve workers' rights. This protocol came at a time when Sudan's work force reached the 2 million figure. This agreement will undoubtedly provide more guarantees. Let me say, however, that our fellow Sudanese are well received and that they work in all sectors just as their fellow Egyptians do.

SUDAN

DUP PRESIDENT MIRGHANI INTERVIEWED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 11-17 Mar 87 p 23

[Interview with Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, president of the Democratic Unionist Party: "Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, President of Democratic Unionist Party Tells AL-MAJALLAH, 'Participation of Aides of the May Regime Undermined Our Party; The Masses Are Still Clinging to the Party; We Want the Party To Be Active and To Steer Political Movement in Sudan';" date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] Mr Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, president of the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] visited party sites and met with the masses to unify the party and mobilize its members for the next stage. AL-MAJALLAH interviewed the DUP leader and reviewed with him his evaluation of the past stage and his aspirations for the party's future. This is the text of the interview.

[Question] How would you evaluate the party's experience during the past period?

[Answer] First, the broad masses of the middle-of-the-road party which represents a political front for the Sudanese people of various races, colors and religions are still clinging to their DUP and to its political and intellectual premises in religious, national and international matters.

Second, there is an urgent need for reconstruction in our ancient party so that its political movement can be calibrated with that of local and international politics. Our party would then once again become active and dominant, directing political and social life in Sudan just as it used to do in the past.

Third, an effort is being made to unite the party's ranks, to make the DUP speak with one voice and to unify its members in a democratic manner that seeks the public interest sincerely and unselfishly, denying self-interest, greed and ambition. Thus, the DUP can once again become a striking force and an active movement through a unique political course which combines authenticity with innovation. I am certain that we can accomplish that once we can speak with one voice and unify our ranks.

[Question] How can this experience be put into action?

[Answer] This experience was formulated in our appeal to convene the party's general congress which would devote attention to the Islamic tendency and to national affiliation with the aim of bringing about comprehensive national unity within Sudan's well-known geographical borders.

The special steering committee for the party's grass roots congresses went to work; its work will be done when the party's general congress is convened.

[Question] What is that congress required to do?

[Answer] The party's grass roots membership is to be established on a rigorous organizational framework in which responsibilities and work loads would be defined and described so that political activity can be confronted attentively in an accurate and organized manner. Through recommendations made by grass roots and mid-level members' congresses, the general congress has to try to determine the organizational framework of the DUP so that each position in the party would have its jurisdiction and its specific area of responsibility. The party's organizational framework can then function homogeneously and harmoniously.

[Question] What are the matters that paralyzed the party's movement, making some people behave like spectators and others side with other parties?

[Answer] First, the divisions that appeared on the surface occurred after the uprising, and they continued to interfere with the party's progress for 9 months. Second, the outlook of the Islamic proposal which the party had adopted was not clear; the confusion was the product of different ideas and assumptions. Third, aides of the May regime took part in this process. As a result, some people turned away from the party. In this regard we will not set ourselves up to judge people because it is up to members of the party to choose who will represent the party on various levels. Anyone who is chosen by the masses and is accepted by them as a representative for the party becomes a true representative of the party. Our party will be as strong as our tolerance for democracy is great.

[Question] You referred to the mystery surrounding the subject of the party's Islamic direction. What is the party's true position on this issue from a political standpoint?

[Answer] When we call for an Islamic revival, we do so not to react to the reality of the political movement, but rather because an Islamic revival is a noble objective and a fundamental quest which our national movement sought in the same manner when colonialists were leaving the country and when we were going through the stage of construction. What some people think is reneging on a promise is seen by the DUP as some kind of political stratagem and conflict scheme to gain something quickly. We must not be distracted from our course, which is based on an objective understanding of the facts of our lives. If we stick to our course, we will not make mistakes that distort the radiant aspect of Islamic laws. Everyone knows that mistakes cannot be made and arbitrary methods cannot be followed in applying the laws of Islam and in using the Islamic way to make judgments on matters because this could be taken against Islam. If that happens, it could create a psychological barrier between the

canonical laws of Islam and this society whose experiences in that regard have been so bitter. that enemies of Islam attributed those bitter experiences to the nature of Islam. But those bitter experiences were nothing but misconceptions and misapplications of Islam which were the result of a search for political objectives that have nothing to do with Islam.

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CRISIS IN DUP REPORTED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 11-17 Mar 87 pp 22, 23

[Article by Muhammad Ahmad Hisham: "Sudan's Democratic Unionist Party Facing Its Most Serious Crisis: Divisions Plague the Party Once Again; Solution To Be Provided by the Postponed General Congress"]

[Text] The party's leaders are more preoccupied with the dissidents and are no longer paying attention to the organization.

The party went into the elections without a specific political program because it had not held its congress.

The Democratic Unionist Party [DUP], which together with the Ummah Party makes up the ruling coalition in Sudan, was supposed to convene its general congress before the parliamentary elections which were held last April. But the congress was not convened.

It was decided that the congress would be convened in January, but it was postponed to February and then to March. That had serious repercussions within the party, creating doubts about the credibility of the decisions which are made by the party.

The DUP had reached the foremost position among Sudan's political parties between 1953 and 1965, before and after the 1968 merger. It had the support of more than three fourths of the voters. But last April it fell to second position among Sudan's parties, winning only 63 electoral districts. This means that the party had failed to maintain its base of support and to preserve its position. It is now being threatened with dissolution, particularly if descriptions of the party's conditions continue to be provided.

What is the present condition of the DUP? What are the tendencies that are pulling it apart? Will it be possible to overcome the crisis it is experiencing? Will its coalition with the Ummah Party survive? What is its true relationship with Egypt? The following report answers these and other questions.

In the past few weeks the present leadership of the DUP, led by Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, announced a program to rally members of the party in preparation for

holding the general congress which has been delayed for over 1 year. Convening that congress was essential because the decision making process in the party depends on the leaders and on a minority in the party which is associated with them. This minority serves in the party's preliminary executive committees. The congress was necessary also because of the party's recent failure to take action outside its traditional, geographic sphere of influence. This failure was due to the party's weak partisan practices and to the absence of its internal tenacity.

A group of party members led by 'Ali Mahmud Husayn broke with the party and announced the establishment of a National Unionist Party. Another group led by Attorney Ahmad Zayn al-'Abidin and al-Hajj Madwi soon followed suit and announced the establishment of the Democratic Alliance--the Political Command. Later, during the elections period, the two factions tried to unite and coordinate their activities under the name, the National Unionist Party, but they soon split off once again.

Reasons for the Setback

A few leaders of the DUP, who preferred to assume a passive position during the period of conflicts and divisions, think that certain circumstances crippled the party. The most important of these are:

--To achieve personal ambitions some party leaders and members vied with each other for leadership positions; they did not take into account the grass roots members of the party.

--Some of those leaders did not consider the party's national interests when they broke with the party and formed other unionist parties to guarantee their own leadership positions.

--The party's leaders paid no attention to the party's organization; they were preoccupied with the dissidents.

--Except for a few contradictory lines issued by a few individuals, the party entered the elections without a political program and without an organization because it had not convened its general congress.

--The party did not have a political program and a political method which the party and its members would be bound by because they were the product of their wishes.

--Individuals acted on their own, setting forth fundamental issues without checking them with party members. Issues such as the September laws, the graduates constituencies, the representation of modern forces and many other issues should have been settled by seeking advice from party member and finding out what they had to say about them.

--The party has been passive on the question of the south, and it has also been isolated from it. It has had no ideas for a solution to the question.

--A few individuals dominated the party; they acted on their own; and they made decisions for the party and determined its policy without an effective democratic organization.

--The party lacked an intellectual presence among students and in universities. It did not have a presence in organizations for workers, farmers and professionals. It ignored the literate sector [of the population]; and it ignored young people and southerners.

Although some of these shortcomings which the party has suffered from can be eliminated by reorganizing the party. there are other subjective factors which cannot be ignored. These are responsible for the manifestations of conflict in this political party.

Chief among these factors are the absence of democracy within the party and a factional leadership. The party also accepted as members within its ranks a few persons who had collaborated with the May regime. That is what kept many leaders and party members away from the party.

Despite these shortcomings, dissident unionist elements failed to resolve the party's question. The internal struggle continued after the parliamentary elections, and divisions within the party lingered even though the party had become an ally in government. But instead of using these circumstances to the party's advantage, some party leaders, because of the divisions within the party, started regarding their party as "an absent partner in the coalition" with the Ummah Party. While DUP leaders were semi-paralyzed politically, leaders of the Ummah Party, the principal ally, controlled power. DUP leaders who were disturbed by their party's "absence" did not hesitate to express their concern candidly. They created difficulties for party leaders by demanding "the dissolution of the unequal coalition." (Mr Muhammad Ziyadah Hammur was the most prominent advocate of the idea of dissolving the coalition.) He is an attorney and a former DUP leader. His anti-coalition proposals were well-received by the opposition, which is led by the National Islamic Front that is led by Dr Hasan al-Turabi. The National Islamic Front continued to promote the idea of dissolving the coalition, devoting to it considerable space in its newspapers. But regardless of the position taken by DUP President Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, party members serving as ministers in the coalition government believe, on the other hand, that the party is playing a full role and that it is not an absent partner as some people think it is. Among those ministers serving in the coalition government are Muhammad Tawfiq Ahmad, the minister of information, and Muhammad Yusuf Abu Hurayrah, the minister of trade.

Despite the special nature of relations which unionists have had with Egypt throughout their history, and regardless of the cautious positions which were taken periodically from time to time, these relations have generally been cool because of an ambiguous and an unclear view that both sides have had in the aftermath of the uprising. This was due to related circumstances which manifested themselves in Egypt's attitude toward the Numayri regime. Egypt later provided Numayri with a place of refuge. It was then that people spoke up in an effort to mend whatever rift might happen to cause these relations to become cool. That tendency was manifested by Mr Ahmad al-Sayyid Hamad, a former leader

of the People's Democratic party [PDP] and currently a member of the Political Office of the DUP. It may be noteworthy that while a high level Sudanese delegation led by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was in Cairo, Mr Ahmad al-Sayyid Hamad went to the Egyptian capital too. He was there on the scene, watching developments as the new relationship was being officially formulated. It is the judgment of some unionists and observers that Egyptian unionist political forces are still waiting for young Sudanese unionist leaders to emerge and to try to rally and strengthen the unionist tendency amidst Sudanese unionists.

Although the party's current picture appears to worry many unionists, a few voices have surfaced calling for reform of the party's conditions. They want to give the party massive first aid assistance to save it and restore its health and vigor before it is too late. Among these voices which have recently been heard is that of the Organization for Supporting and Organizing the Democratic Unionist Party. This organization has started outlining its activities and observing and analyzing problems. It has started making contacts with unionist activists, including some dissidents, members of the Political Office of the DUP and veteran unionists who had preferred to stay away from political activity a long time ago. Their meetings recently culminated in a visit to the leader of the party, Mr Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani. Muhammad 'Uthman Malik, activities coordinator for this group told AL-MAJALLAH, "They considered themselves outside all the categories which the party had suffered from. The aim of their appeal was not to establish a new organization, but rather to rally all moderate forces to make them assume a positive attitude toward building this party, which is considered their historical party."

As Mr Malik explains, this organization proposed a draft agreement to unify unionist factions and moderate forces. That draft agreement consists of 10 points which may be greatly summarized by stating that they involve agreeing to accept the principle of unification in one party. the Democratic Unionist party. These points involve agreeing to abide by the democratic method; accepting Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani as guardian of the unified party in its pursuit of the spiritual course which was set by his father, 'Ali Mirghani; and accepting the notion that the current parliamentary organization of the DUP is the most legitimately democratic segment of the DUP. Accordingly, it has to carry more weight in that body which organizes the party and convenes the general congress of unionist factions and moderate forces. The draft agreement also involves adhering to a commitment to stop media campaigns in newspapers and elsewhere; trying to draft a complete draft constitution; and agreeing to allow those currently representing the party in existing constitutional agencies to continue serving until the general congress is convened.

The Party's Functions

Sources indicate that this plan was presented to various unionist activists. The organization also presented it to the party's leader, Muhammad 'Uthman Mirghani, who promised he would study it. It seems that the plan is being welcomed by al-Sharif Zayn al-'Abidin al-Hindi, the party's secretary general. Party circles think that he represents the flexible tendency in the party. Also, the plan was not opposed by those who have a strong relationship with the party's leader:

people like Muhammad al-Hasan 'Abdallah Yasin, member of the council of the head of state, and other party representatives. In spite of that, however, it does not seem that the plan of the Organization for Supporting and Organizing the Democratic Unionist Party will pass unopposed. Opposition to that plan will come in particular from hard-liners and traditional leaders in the party who will stir up the problem of al-Khatmiyah's dominance. They will attempt to diminish that role and the role of the leader of the party, and they will try to restore guardianship to the party. Also among the hard-liners within the party are those people who are rallying around Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn, deputy secretary general. That group of people regards the organization as a foreign body which wants to seize command on the basis of assumptions and then move ahead beyond that.

It seems that the party's general congress will have to be convened to settle several issues chief among which are those of holding the leaders accountable for the condition that the party has come to; reviewing the records of the party's expenditures; electing a unionist and a democratic leadership; and, finally, solving the problems of the unionists' unity.

But there is a group which cannot be ignored: this group is apprehensive about convening the congress. A few people in that group hold leadership positions at the present time. And there is another group of people who fear that through the congress some of the party's stars who supported the May regime could return to the party.

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SUMMARY OF DRAFT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS REPORTED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 25-31 Mar 87 p 25

[Article: "Summary of Draft Amendments"]

[Text] The memorandum commenting on the draft constitutional amendments made it clear that the constitutional amendments amended five principal articles of the provisional constitution. With regard to the principle of equality and the rule of law, the aforementioned amendments included replacing Article 11 of the provisional constitution with Article 7 of the 1956 Provisional Constitution for the Republic of Sudan, which was amended in 1964. This amended article stipulates that persons as well as official and non-official societies are subject to the provisions of the law. Parliamentary privileges are the only exceptions to that. This is the opposite of the previous amended article which made the state and every person subject to the rule of law. As a result of this amendment the state and its actions are no longer subject to legal control as they were before.

Article 16.A. was also amended. That amendment stipulated that the principal goals of the National Pact (the Pact of the Uprising) be included in Part Two of the Constitution because these goals are the principles guiding the state's policy. This was done for the purpose of reviving the Rajab uprising and giving it constitutional legitimacy. These goals include eliminating the effects of the May regime: ensuring democracy; saving the national economy; and reforming public service agencies.

The memorandum commenting on the draft amendments made it clear that it is unacceptable to object to these amendments on the grounds that they are not needed because there are ordinary laws on the books for achieving the goal. Such an objection is unacceptable because every constitution that was written after a people's revolution established the principles behind that revolution's goals and adopted its slogans. To say that the amendments invalidate the rule of law can be refuted; it is an argument that is not based on logic or law.

Article 68 of the provisional constitution was also amended. According to the proposed amendment a meeting of the constituent assembly can be held with 30 percent of its members instead of with a simple majority. The purpose of that is to make a distinction between a quorum for convening the constituent assembly and a quorum for getting the assembly's opinion on matters that are presented to

it. Article 100.B. of the provisional constitution was also amended. According to that amendment the executive authority will be given the power to issue temporary decrees to deal with emergency situations whenever the constituent assembly is not in session. These matters are then to be brought in front of the constituent assembly as soon as it convenes. If the decrees are not brought to the assembly 2 weeks after it is convened, they are to be suspended. Of course, the decrees would be suspended if the assembly refuses to support them.

Article 136 of the provisional constitution was also amended. The new amendment authorized the constituent assembly to amend, accept, or reject the constitution by an absolute majority. It was thought that that majority should be defined as 60 percent of the assembly's elected members.

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WRITER CLAIMS MUSLIMS OUTNUMBER CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH

Khartoum AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 17 Mar 87 p 7

[Article by 'Abd-al-Muttalib Shadad: "Islam in the South: Muslims and Christians in the Same Tribe; the Claim that the South Is Christian Is False: 30 Percent of the Population in the South are Muslim and 15 Percent Are Christian"]

[Text] What are the facts about Islam and Muslims in the southern regions? What kinds of relationships do Muslims have with other residents of the south? Where is the truth in what we hear and read every day about Islam in the south? What is the significance of finding the statement, the South is Christian, at the end of every news report which has to do with the southern region? Such a closing remark suggests that the southern region is entirely Christian; it suggests that the conflict in the southern regions is one between Muslims and Christians and that it has a religious basis.

Most countries of the world believe that there are Muslim and Christian tribes in Sudan's southern regions and that the conflict there is based on that fact. We emphasize that responsibility for such erroneous ideas about the south lie with the western media, which is hostile to Sudan. They have put so much emphasis on these erroneous ideas that in the views of these countries they became facts. The weakness of our media, compared with the capabilities of the media in advanced countries, helped make that happen. In fact, most fellow citizens in Sudan who reside in the country's other regions do not know much about the south and about the true conditions of Muslims and Christians there.

The existing situation in the south between Muslims and Christians is unique. Nothing similar can be found in any other country. No Muslim tribes are fighting Christian tribes, and no one is engaged in religious wars. The situation in the south is quite different: there are Muslims and Christians in the same tribe. In fact, there are Muslims and Christians in the same family. And that is a unique situation the likes of which cannot be found anywhere. How can people in such a situation fight each other? Islam has always preserved and protected the rights of neighbors and the rights of other religions. In the south one can find 10 brothers in one family, and one of those would be a Muslim. That one Muslim in the family would enjoy the affection and appreciation of his non-Muslim brothers who rally around him and ask his advice on all matters great and small. It is this special relationship which has been and still is prompting the white man to make every effort to turn Christians against their fellow Muslims. However, the

nature of individual relationships between Muslims and Christians in the south has always foiled the white man's efforts to drive a wedge between members of the same family, members of the same tribe and fellow countrymen. That is why there has never been a clash between Muslims and Christians despite the white man's provocations, and I am referring to the priests who are scattered in churches in the south.

The Alleged Christianity in the South

Western media broadcasts claim that the south is Christian. Such claims are false, and there is no truth to them. It cannot be said, of course, that the south is Christian because Muslims lived in the south a long time before Christians did. If we were to go back in history, we would find out that Sudan had Islamic governments which exercised influence in the south. Relations between the south and the Fur Sultanate in West Sudan and the Fung Sultanate are well-known. The Fung had ongoing relations with tribes living in the northern parts of the southern regions. And Sudan had a Turkish government which lasted for almost 60 years.

A large number of people living in the south joined the Turkish armies and embraced Islam. Upon their return to the south they helped spread Islam. During the days of al-Mahdi the armies penetrated the farthest regions of the south, and that bolstered the presence of Islam in the region. A large number of southerners also joined the army under the condominium government. After being discharged from military service they returned to the south and helped promote Islam there. They had embraced the Sufi way of life, which they had taken from the north and brought to the south. Islam was also spread by the al-Jallaba. These are merchants from the north whose agreeable business practices and general good nature enabled them to persuade large numbers of southerners to embrace Islam.

This historical account shows us quite clearly that Islam has roots in the south and that these roots have been there for a very long period of time. This is a fact, and there can be no misleading arguments about it. When the British realized how powerful the influence of Islam was, when they saw how quickly it was spreading and how southerners were naturally disposed to accept it, they came up with a system of closed regions. Their aim was to check the spread of Islam in the south and to prevent the establishment of good relations between it and the north. Thus, the south would become a sphere of influence for Christians. Churches and Christian missionary schools were actually built in the south; and Christianity became widespread there under the auspices of the closed regions law.

Effects of the Advent of Christianity in the South on Muslims

Reacting to the enactment of the closed regions law, the first thing Muslims in the south did was keep their children out of church schools because they feared the influence which the precepts of another religion could have on their children. The intellectual, cultural, social and economic consequences of that were quite grave. That is why when independence came to Sudan, the standard of Muslims in the south was low: they were not qualified for leadership positions. That undoubtedly led to a situation in which Muslims in the south were hardly

heard. In addition, officials in the north ignored Muslims in the south because they were poor and powerless. All these factors made Muslims in the south unheard and uncouneted. Now, however, the intellectual condition of Muslims in the south is quite different. There is a very large number of Muslim intellectuals who are capable of leading Muslims in the southern regions.

In the last statistics prepared in 1984 we find that there are 450 religious assembly halls, 70 brick mosques and 200 straw mosques in Equatoria region. This is clear and concrete evidence of Muslims' influence and of their present prestige. These figures do not include the principal centers of Islam in the southern regions: the Upper Nile and Bahr al-Ghazal. In these areas Muslims make up the vast majority of the population. All that refutes the claims which are always being made in an attempt to silence Muslims in the south so that what colonialism had started can be consolidated. The number of Muslims in south Sudan is twice that the number of Christians. Muslims make up 30 percent of the population, whereas Christians are no more than 15 percent of the population in the south. The rest of the population in south Sudan are pagans.

Muslims' second reaction to the advent of Christianity in the south was the establishment of the Islamic Organization in South Sudan, an area which used to be the hotbed of Christian missionary organizations. The idea for an Islamic organization began early in 1977 when Muslim delegations from the Upper Nile, Bahr al-Ghazal and the city of Juba met together to discuss the conditions of Muslims in the south. They met once again in 1980 to create an institution in the form of a constituent assembly to establish the movement's basic rules and principles. An advisor on Islamic affairs was appointed for the first time in the regional government. Then 16 out of 30 members of the Juba Council joined the regional government, and in April 1983 the organization became legitimate. It had 40 branches: 22 in Equatoria; 10 in the Upper Nile region; and 8 in Bahr al-Ghazal. One of the organization's most important objectives was to establish a religious and a social bond between Muslims in cities and villages and mosques. The organization would establish that bond by promoting and furthering Islamic conduct, establishing houses of worship, encouraging the establishment of Islamic centers in the south and inspiring the spirit of solidarity and fraternity among all Muslims with different levels of awareness.

Besides the Islamic Organization for South Sudan there is a Society for the Protection and Care of the Poor. It was established in 1981 to promote Islamic awareness among residents of southern regions in the area of Uwayl. That society did its work among the Dinkas, but because of instability in the region at that time, the society's administration moved to Nyalla in south Darfur in December 1982. There it built its offices and is now working to train and educate southerners to do Islamic work among their own people. Recently, the society was able to bring 500 persons into the world of Islam. The work is being done by about 10 spiritual guides, 3 religious assembly hall teachers, and 6 administrators.

We conclude from this that stating that the majority of the population in south Sudan are Christians constitutes biased propaganda. And it is clear to everyone that such a statement is propaganda. The western media is devoting its efforts to obfuscating the facts about the south: they are broadcasting news, reports and information suggesting that this part of Sudan is purely Christian territory.

SUDAN

BUDGET DEFICIT REPORTED FOR FIRST SIX MONTHS

Khartoum AL-USBU' in Arabic 18 Mar 87 p 1

[Article by Mustafa Yusuf and 'Asim al-Bilal: "Minister of Finance Addresses Constituent Assembly: Proceeds from Exports Are 206.5 Million Dollars; the 33 Percent Deficit Is Due to the Ban on Exporting Livestock; Sudan's Debts Amount to 10.6 Billion Dollars; Debt Payment of 4.17 Billion Dollars Due in 5 Years"]

[Text] Dr Bashir 'Umar, minister of finance and economic planning announced that the budget deficit during the past 6 months had amounted to 716 million Sudanese pounds. He attributed that to the fact that the equivalent of the commodity supply was not achieved in sufficient quantity.

In a statement delivered in front of the assembly about the government's financial performance during the past 6 months after the budget was approved, the minister said that the government owed the banks 283.6 million pounds. That is 10.6 percent of current revenues. This indicates that the government is proceeding with [its scheme] of borrowing from banks approximately 10 percent of revenues.

The minister of finance added that proceeds from exports amounted to 206.6 million dollars. This represents 67 percent of estimated proceeds from exports for the same period. The 33 percent drop is due to the ban on exporting livestock.

The minister said that imports amounted to 577.7 million dollars, and that is less than the 756 million dollars estimated for imports. Sudan was able to pay back 41.6 million dollars of its debt. This includes 22 million dollars of the money owed plus 19 million dollars in interest.

The minister said that actual total spending amounted to 2.138 billion pounds. He said that savings amounted to 633 million Sudanese pounds. Spending for development amounted to 396 million dollars, and 68 percent of funds that were borrowed for projects have been spent.

The minister added that 93 percent of current revenues whose total is 1.2416 billion pounds were collected during the past period.

The minister affirmed that the government was trying to increase its effort to achieve high rates of implementation. There is also a four-part reform program to put the Sudanese economy on the right track.

In another statement on the other hand, the minister announced that in the next 5 years it will be somewhat difficult, if not altogether impossible, for the government to pay back all its debts plus interest and late payments. This amounts to 4.170 billion dollars. Because of the country's deteriorating economic situation, Sudan would find it difficult to make these payments.

The minister said that by 12/31/1986 Sudan's total debts had amounted to 10.6 billion U.S. dollars. This includes 2.143 billion dollars owed to international institutions; 2.382 billion dollars owed to the countries of the Paris Club; 3.939 billion dollars owed to other countries; 1.883 billion dollars owed to commercial banks; and 325 million dollars in terms owed to suppliers. The minister said that these debts are being reviewed to ascertain that they are legitimate and to verify the figures.

The minister indicated that 3.105 billion dollars were appropriated for development projects from the original debt of 6.9 billion dollars. The government withdrew 2.263 billion dollars for projects, and this money was put to good use. The 1.803 billion dollars, which Sudan owes to the banks, were utilized in importing essential goods. The minister said that an agreement had been reached with commercial banks to reschedule their debts which amount to 1 billion dollars. These debts will be paid over a 4-year period with a 3-year grace period.

The minister mentioned that there were specific alternatives regarding the debt, and he said that attempts were underway with the agencies in question. He said that since the imbalance has persisted, the government must continue the policy of borrowing from abroad.

The minister said that with regard to monies owed to Arab institutions, an agreement was reached that these debts be paid in local currency. In the case of countries other than those in the Paris Club, what is owed to them is manifested in military and war equipment. Regarding what is owed to socialist countries, Sudanese goods will be exported to pay back 50 percent of the debt. The rest of the debt will be paid in free currency.

The assembly will discuss today the statement by the minister of finance on financial performance.

8592

CSO: 4504/192

FLOUR, BREAD SHORTAGES IN CAPITAL REPORTED

Flour Consumption Rises

Khartoum AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 16 Mar 87 p 3

[Article by Iman Khalil]

[Text] An official source in the Ministry of Commerce, Cooperation and Supply announced that bread consumption in the capital is rising annually at a rate of 8 to 10 percent. This increase in consumption is caused by changing conditions and an increase in the number of consumers.

The source made it clear that 14,000 sacks of flour had been consumed in the capital: 7,000 of these sacks contained locally produced flour, and the rest contained imported flour.

The minister indicated that there were 11 flour mills in Sudan: 4 were in the capital; 4 were in the Central Region; 2 in the Eastern Region; and one in the Northern Region, which is not meeting demand.

The source asked that an effort be made so that distribution of locally produced flour can be carried out on the basis of ending the current shortage and taking into account the number and kind of consumers. Agreements must be made with countries that export flour so that we would have a year-round schedule of flour deliveries and avoid subjecting various areas of the country to occasional shortages.

Severe Bread, Power Shortage

Khartoum AL-RAYAH in Arabic 24 Mar 87 p 1

[Text] In the past 2 days some areas of the capital have had a severe bread shortage and a severe shortage in water and power supplies. A trade source attributed the bread shortage to the disappearance of yeast and to a shortage in the amount of flour authorized for bakeries.

The source told AL-RAYAH that the government delegation which is negotiating for flour through U.S. aid is still engaged in discussions in Geneva. Meanwhile, the flour which the Saudis are providing in aid to Sudan has not yet arrived to the

country, and that has led authorities in the Ministry of Commerce to reduce the amounts of flour authorized to bakeries.

On the other hand, AL-RAYAH has learned from informed trade sources that a severe sugar shortage is expected during the month of Ramadan [approximately, 29 April 1987 - 27 May 1987]. The source said that the minister of industry's announcement that the government wishes to raise sugar prices forced merchants to store the sugar they had in their stores in anticipation of the announced new price. The source said that the government had made a serious mistake by announcing a price increase before taking adequate measures.

Elsewhere, several areas in the capital were affected by a power failure and an interruption of the water supply which lasted for several hours. As a result of that, a number of citizens in al-Thawrah City in Omdurman demonstrated; they burned car tires and chanted anti-government slogans.

8592

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TUNISIA

DEBATE OVER PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC-SOCIAL COUNCIL ANALYZED

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Mar 87 p 4

[Article by Slaheddine Jourchi: "Now That the Prime Minister's Meeting With the Opposition Delegates Has Been Cancelled, Has the Attempt Failed?]

[Text] The prime minister cancelled his promised meeting with opposition delegates, and in its stead sent a lengthy letter to all the parties (the Socialist Democratic Movement, the Communist Party, and the Popular Unity Movement) requesting that within one week from the date of the letter they recommend some of their members, from among whom the president will select whomever he wants.

This decision surprised these parties, which felt that it was a negative sign implying a hard-line tendency and that it passed up an opportunity for direct dialog which they had prepared for and wanted to develop and expand so as to extricate government-opposition relations from the stagnation besetting them.

What made the government go back on its promise? How does the recognized opposition look upon this change of mind? Has the economic-social council initiative been effectively terminated?

The prime minister gave no official excuse for cancelling his first appointment, which was to have been held last Monday. His office merely asked for a postponement, without connecting it to anything going on behind the political scenes. This may mean that the meeting might be held some other time. However, the letters received by the leaders of the three parties contained some excuses which might explain the sudden change on the government's part.

The letter did not refer to the point brought up by the opposition's letters pertaining to clearing the air. This means that the government is insisting on separating the question of participation in the economic-social council from general political life and the everyday problems the parties come up against, such as the material and legal pressures exerted against them--the very point on which the delegations would have concentrated during their meeting with the prime minister. The government feels that this subject

should not be broached with the opposition right now, perhaps because it feels that not much progress could be made there. As far as the parties are concerned, this excuse is not very convincing.

Even though the government sees the importance of all the revisions to the council's statute called for by parties, in its letter it stressed that no such changes could be made right now, because in the government's view this would require more time than it can spare because of its commitment to the so-called "timetable for the discussion and ratification of the seventh plan."

This was surely the president's idea, since he alone has the right to decide any changes, postponements or selections.

These three factors may explain the decision which the government finally reached. And what is the stand of the opposition parties?

No doubt the political organizations involved are consulting among themselves these days as to how to respond to the prime minister's letter. Therefore, they feel that the exchange of letters is "to a certain extent positive," as Mohamed Harmel told us, adding that "this kind of dialog must be extended to include other issues." However, direct meetings, which might open new horizons, are indispensable.

The opposition feels that it has been responsible and flexible in dealing with the recent initiative. In spite of its objections to the seventh plan and its limited influence in the council, it has accepted the idea of participation, and has therefore presented some reasonable suggestions and amendments. Should the government reject any formal or substantive changes before the opposition parties join the council, and thus adhere to the existing law, the recognized opposition will respond by refusing to recommend any of its members and by continuing its boycott of the council in its present form; if it were to agree to join at any price, it would contradict all of its prior statements, and would accept the plan without getting anything in return. This may have been what Harmel was referring to when he told us, "The question of representation is not ripe yet, and the conditions for its success are not present, especially now that the prime minister has cancelled the meeting."

The invitation to join the economic-social council has now become void, or virtually so, and the government may have failed in its first political initiative towards the opposition. Since it will not be considered responsible for this result, in view of the so-called "party rivalry" and the pressures on it from all sides, it can only continue lurching forward all by itself, taking successive measures to confront the complications of the economic crisis. On the other hand, the opposition parties remain captive to the government's initiatives, waiting for them and then reacting negatively and positively, while being unable to transcend them and move on to imposing new initiatives which might make the political movement more vital and more mature. The opposition feels that it has now escaped from the predicament of having to agree to the seventh plan, but it remains responsible, to a certain degree, for the country's future and the people's interests.

Even though some observers feel that "national accord" must be achieved and the political air cleared in order to avoid violent social reactions, the political scene still lacks clear direction and is going around in circles in the same place, alternating between continually looking back and worrying about the future.

8559

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TUNISIA

SFAR, MESTIRI CORRESPOND ON ECONOMIC-SOCIAL COUNCIL

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Mar 87 p 4

[Article: "Correspondence Between the Prime Minister and Ahmed Mestiri"]

[Text] At the president's initiative, the government has invited the opposition parties to take part in the economic-social council.

In this connection, Rached Sfar has written to the opposition parties, each of which has responded separately expressing some reservations about the manner of this participation.

The correspondence between the government and the opposition parties is still continuing.

Here AL-RA'Y publishes the prime minister's recent second letter to Ahmed Mestiri, secretary general of the Movement of Socialist Democrats, and the latter's reply.

The Prime Minister's Recent Letter To Secretary General of the Movement of Socialist Democrats Ahmed Mestiri

We have received your letter of 16 February 1987 replying to our letter No. 197 of 6 February 1987 inviting your party to participate in the economic-social council, in compliance with the Great Struggler President Habib Bourguibah's move enabling the political parties to take part in this council.

While expressing your regard for the president's initiative to expand and enhance the dialog, you expressed some reservations about the suggested manner in which your party might participate. In particular, you stressed the need to amend the existing law pertaining to the economic-social council.

In response to your comments, I would like to assure you once again that the government's desire to expand the composition of the economic-social council so as to include the other political parties on the basis of the existing law, without waiting to amend it, arises from our desire to intensify organized, successful consultation, particularly at this point in the council's activity,

since in the next few weeks it will be undertaking a study of the seventh economic and social development plan. We cannot postpone these activities, since they are bound up with the schedule for drawing up the plan, which must be presented to the Council of Deputies no later than early June of this year.

Essentially, this is our main reason for suggesting that you take part in the economic-social council in the manner provided by the law now in effect. It should be noted that the choice of party representatives will in effect fall to the head of state and no one else, according to your proposals.

We believe that this will reconcile the need for speedy action, because of the schedule imposed on us by the activities involved in drawing up the plan, with our desire that we not pass up this important opportunity to expand organized, concentrated dialog.

This initiative will permit the embodiment of an experiment unique to our country, one which we must all embark on seriously and responsibly, so that it can succeed not only in form but in essence, and yield the results which we hope to achieve. If such an experiment proves successful in strengthening and promoting dialog, it will be easy for us to agree in the fullness of time to amend the law on the basis of the practical experience which we will have gained during the next few months, and to thus incorporate on the formal level what we will have achieved on the level of essence and principle.

Given these facts, we hope that you will be kind enough to quickly provide us with a list of your suggestions as to membership in the economic-social council in its present form, pending amendment of the law.

In view of the need to determine the new make-up of the economic-social council as soon as possible, so that it can get started on time on the specific activities awaiting it, we hope that you will promptly provide us as soon as possible with a list of candidates from your party, at least within the week. If we do not receive your suggestions by then, we will be forced to decide the make-up of the council in light of what information we have. Also, you are well aware of our responsibility to manage the country's affairs while respecting the deadlines set by the various state agencies' work programs.

In closing, we send you our utmost regards.

Prime Minister Rachid Sfar

Ahmed Mestiri's Response

Tunis, 3 March 1987

Prime Minister Rachid Sfar:

We have received your letter of 25 February 1987 replying to our 16 February 1987 letter concerning our movement's stand on the issue of participation in the economic-social council.

We would like to take this occasion to affirm our movement's ongoing, fundamental adherence to the call for sound national dialog, particularly among organizations, as our country's constitution provides. Our movement's second congress clearly stated this stand, saying that such dialog is, in our view, the only way the country can escape from the profound, serious crisis now besetting it.

Furthermore, our movement declares its adherence to this stand, even though it and all the other democratic and national forces have been prevented from participating in any way in the elected representative organizations, and even from addressing public opinion through newspapers and information media.

In general, our readiness for dialog was proven by our response to your invitation to meet, which was extended on 20 February 1987 and cancelled for unknown reasons the following day.

As for the draft of the seventh plan, which the economic-social council has already begun looking into, our movement cannot express any opinion on it unless it is able to participate in all stages of preparation from the very start. In addition, it is the patriotic duty of all national forces to share in formulating, following up, and supervising development plans, so that the shortcomings and deviations which have repeatedly occurred will not happen again. As everyone knows, the projected goals have not been achieved in the desired manner.

Because of the foregoing, our movement adheres to the stand which it has so clearly expressed in our earlier letter, particularly the general political need to provide the proper conditions which will make participation in the economic-social council by the opposition and the country's vital forces more serious and effective from the democratic and developmental standpoints.

Secondly, we cannot participate in the council in its present composition, or in the manner proposed, given the critical circumstances through which our country is passing right now, which in our opinion call for serious, responsible interaction among the various national parties.

In closing, we send you our utmost regards.

Secretary General Ahmed Mestiri

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TUNISIA

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS PRESENT VIEWS ON STRIKE

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Mar 87 p 7

[Article by Nedjmeddine Akkari: "We Will Return to Studies If --"]

[Text] This year, as every year, the University of Tunisia is going through an increasingly critical situation which threatens to erupt. Studies have been suspended in most sections of the university and disputes have emerged within conflicts in the ideological positions of the various parties in the university concerning current problems and ways of evaluating and resolving them.

AL-RA'Y met with a group of students belonging to various influential factions in the student arena and asked them about their view of the university situation and ways of resolving it. They were approximately in unanimity in considering that the situation is becoming increasingly critical and they expressed readiness to return to classes in exchange for the realization of some demands which they consider necessary if they are to return to studies in suitable circumstances, the most important of which are the removal of the blockade set up around the university and the release of arrested persons.

The August Order Is the Cause

Student N.B.'A. (an adherent of Islam) considered that the main cause of the university situation is "the August 1982 order on the one hand and the insistence of the authorities not to negotiate over it, although all students and professors acknowledge its negative nature."

This student believed that the resolution to this problem "will come about only through the relinquishment of violence in dealing with the student sector, since there is no way to avoid stating that the students are at a level of awareness which enables them to understand their situation and that of their country, and therefore negotiation and the exchange of views between students and the supervising authorities are necessary. In this context, I consider that the meeting between the president of the university of the north and a group of student representatives is an initiative which merits encouragement and general application."

The Strikes Are Secondary: It Is Necessary To Resume Studies

Loutfi Mahfouzi, a Destourian student (who insisted in accompanying his colleagues since his position was personally compatible and only he himself bound himself to it), considered "The situation in the university is growing increasingly critical and does not encourage the pursuit of examinations in proper circumstances. Boycotting studies will have painful consequences for the students after the examination."

Loutfi Mahfouzi considered "The strikes are secondary and there is no clear reason for them. At one time a strike is held to protest the situation of the Palestinians in the Lebanese camps and at another time to protest the bad quality of the food. That is, there is no unified statement which we are presenting to the officials to review."

The Destourian student added, "We call for constructive dialogue among all students on behalf of restructuring the university and resolving its problems. As regards the August order, we have called for its elimination or review for more than 2 years and now reiterate the statement that it is a law which does not serve the students' interests."

This Destourian student considered that the solution "lies in the students' rallying together, in view of the interests involved in that for them and for the university, and in returning to studies as soon as possible or resorting to pressure on the supervising ministry to force the students to continue studies if the situation requires that. One should bear in mind that the place for the police is the street, not the university sanctuary, which it is prohibited from entering except in cases which require intervention, especially when there is an exchange of violence. I support the slogan 'No studies under guard.'"

The University Crisis Is Connected to the Country's Crisis

This is the view the two students Choukri D. and Nouredine S. (leftists) took. They added, "The authorities, after striking at the federation, have continued the same procedure with the university in order to deal individually with the mass organizations and control them, by carrying out a series of arrests and detentions and striking out at active student elements."

The two left-wing students considered "Two points of emphasis are raised in the university. The first is related to the assault on the August 82 law, which the students who adhere to Islam are leading, aiming, thereby, at swaying their rank and file, attempting to gain mass support for their federation, which has not received legal approval, and also blocking the left's drive to hold the 18th conference of the General Federation of Students of Tunisia.

"The way the August law was presented is wrong, since it could be raised in isolation from general educational policy in the country and selection policy. Moreover, the people endorsing it now through their use of the form of open strikes have emptied the university of students. They are supposed to be present and join forces in this mission.

"The second point of emphasis which has been raised in the university is the holding of the 18th exceptional conference, which is not just considered a number but indeed a group of political contents and moreover also the return of the masses of the student movement to rallying the broadest students about the gains of the political and organizational movement."

The two students considered that the solution to the growing crisis the university is suffering from lies in the release of the arrested students and the return to studies, especially since the rank and file students have expressed great anxiety over their fate. One should bear in mind that the professors in the Faculty of Law, for instance, have declared their unreadiness to hold examinations after next 4 July.

11887
CSO: 4504/188

RISE OF ISLAMIST STUDENT MOVEMENT REVIEWED

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Mar 87 pp 1,11

[Article by Habib Achour: "The Student Crisis: Political Background"]

[Text] The university scene tends to explode from time to time. Most of the colleges and institutes of higher education have seen periodic strikes protesting the August 1982 decree which allowed only two appointments per year in the first phase.

But what are the facts? The background to this conflict? Who is involved in it? Why was the August 1982 decree passed?

Does the conflict concern only the university, or does it go further?

Is it in the country's interest for such a conflict to erupt within the university precincts?

From the beginning, the university has been the arena for a struggle to control it, because all the active political parties are convinced, rightly or wrongly, that whoever possesses the university possesses the future.

In the Sixties, the struggle was between the Destourian Socialist students and the leftist students.

The balance of power gradually evolved totally in favor of the leftists, and thus the Destourian Socialist Party lost its social primacy by the late Seventies. This marked the start of deeper and more widespread popular withdrawal from the university.

With the "exodus" of Destourian students from the university, the first signs of a new trend began to appear, one which would have future ramifications.

The Emergence of the Islamists

The Islamists began to get a foothold at the university in the early Seventies. Their emergence met with a violent reaction on the part of the leftists, who felt that the Islamists were "representatives of feudal remnants, or even agents of the regime." This impass did not prevent the Islamic Tendency from expanding its influence at the university, where it quickly became the second axis on the university scene, following the leftists.

In spite of the avowed or implicit alliance of the various leftist forces to resist the "Islamist expansion," by the early Eighties the latter succeeded in becoming the prime force within the university, both numerically and organizationally.

The crisis of the left, its schisms and its erosion, and the new spirit which the Iranian revolution gave to the various Islamic movements might to a great extent explain the speed with which the balance of power was overturned in favor of the Islamists.

In this context, one also cannot disregard the obvious politicization which engulfed the Islamic Tendency ever since the late Seventies, a politicization which no doubt coincided with the aspirations of recognized Islamic groups to establish an open party in June 1981.

But the authorities, fearing "expansion by the Muslim Brotherhood," vehemently refused to legally recognize this movement, and took many of its founders to court. Those sympathizers who were working to form an unlicensed society were imprisoned for 3 years or more.

From that time on, the main weight within the university shifted to the Islamic Tendency.

At that time, the Islamists based their strategy on "badgering." As former Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali stressed, the idea was to reduce the university system's ties with the outside world.

This plan of theirs was partially successful. But the threat of prison, along with the resultant scattering of the ranks, and then the surge of hope which occurred when their detained leaders were released in August 1984, made them more cautious about escalating the situation, especially since the authorities were preoccupied with the union movement, which was getting continually stronger following the Qafsah conference.

The Union Link

Once its leaders got out of prison, the Islamic Tendency Movement began reorganizing its ranks, overcoming the vestiges of the prison phase, and patching up the contradictions which had arisen within the movement. During this period its relations with the authorities were more or less relaxed.

The Islamic Tendency students chose this time to establish the so-called Tunisian General Federation of Students, through which they hoped to end the influence of the Grand Mosque students' mouthpiece [Sawt al-Talib al-Zaytuni] and "close the parentheses" opened by the General Federation of Tunisian Students in 1954.

The Islamic Tendency Movement claimed that this federation would be the organizational link through which they could turn their expansion within the university into a flood which could not be turned back.

Even though this link had undeniably positive aspects for the strategy of the Islamists, since it enabled them to attract new members in a way the old methods had not been able to, all the forces and tendencies on the university scene, from the Destourian Socialist students to the organizations of the far left, rallied against the Islamists.

Beginning in the summer of 1985, the democratic process experienced several disturbances, in fact a real setback, which basically amounted to the suppression, and then the breaking, of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor. The opposition parties' margin of movement was removed, and there was a deluge of suspensions of independent and opposition newspapers.

Once that was just about finished, and after Habib Achour had been thrown into prison, the authorities turned their attention to the Islamic Tendency. Both sides began preparing for a confrontation which each believed would be decisive.

The "Badgering"

Here the Islamists resorted to their old plan: exerting pressure on the authorities through the university. However, what is new here is the purpose behind this pressure--to force the authorities to recognize that the "Tunisian General Federation of Students," even though unrecognized, is a fact that it cannot get around, and that the university will never know peace or stability unless this federation is recognized as the basic representative of the student masses.

But at this particular time, the authorities seem unwilling to share influence with anyone, especially if the opposing party is the Islamic Tendency.

Therefore, all the facts indicate that the authorities want to put an end to the Islamic Tendency at the university, and that this movement is determined to protect its existence, and is concentrating on the August 1982 decree this year.

But why has the August 1982 decree been brought up this year in particular?

The Islamists' intention behind concentrating on this decree obviously involves the following considerations:

1. No one can accuse them of partisanship or sectarianism.

2. It makes their unrecognized federation appear to be a union organization working only to defend the material and moral rights of the students.

3. It shows that they are capable of organizing, mobilizing, and imposing whatever "agenda" they chose.

Both sides may be insisting on their stands because this would enable each to rally its ranks, cover up its contradictions, and direct all its energy towards the other side.

The authorities clearly feel that the time has come to wipe out a movement which it fears will make inroads into popular circles and the young people in particular, relying, in the absence of a mobilization plan, on whatever means of force it possesses.

The authorities might win this round, but the after-effects which will remain in people's minds, and the allegations which will follow this repression, will in the end render this solution disadvantageous to the authorities.

The Islamic Tendency may be wrong to believe that the solution is to continue the strikes and do whatever it can to escalate the situation, because this can be expected to alienate more and more students who are not ready for this year be a "banner year". Ultimately, the danger of collision continues to threaten to shrink the margin of individual and public freedoms in the country.

The university faculty and all the patriotic forces must therefore be aware of the gravity of the situation, and must do everything they can to prevent such a clash.

8559

CSO: 4504/174

CRACKDOWN ON ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCED

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Mar 87 p 1

[Article: "Detentions and Trials in the Ranks of the Adherents of Islam"]

[Text] We have learned that the police have started a broad campaign of rounding up persons known for their affiliation with the Islamic Tendency organization, an organization which is not recognized by the authorities.

Circles close to the families of the detained persons have informed us that some of their relatives were taken over by certain practices which the law does not condone and which contradict human rights, by means of some personnel of unknown identity.

If this information is correct, AL-RA'Y is amazed at the continuation of these practices, which we had thought had been finished and done with, and it condemns them as it condemns the violence and pressure which some student parties engaged in against their colleagues in view of the infringement of humanity and the citizen's right of expression that has entailed.

We have also learned from circles in the League of the Defense of Human Rights that after the detention of Mr Rached Ghannouchi on the morning of Monday 9 March, Messrs Mabrouk Lazrane (professor), Messaoud El Hajjam (head of a department), Abdelkader Amri (professor), Hachemi Hamdi (an employee in a bank, who is suffering from a serious health situation), Ali Nouir (professor), Mohamed Nejib Khediri (professor), Hachemi Djemni (professor) and Mohamed Hedi Ben Messaoud (university professor) were detained on the night of 12-13 March and during the day of Friday the 13th, and a search for other persons is underway.

On 28 April 1987, 26 adherents of Islam returning from residence abroad against whom verdicts were issued in absentia in 1981 and after will be submitted to Department 15 in the court of appeals in Tunis.

The court of first instance issued its verdict regarding the persons concerned which in a group of cases came to 2 years and 7 months in prison.

TUNISIA

BRIEFS

ISLAMIST STUDENTS DETAINED--Last week security forces arrested several students at the National Engineers School in Tunis, later releasing them. It seems that the security forces launched this operation in order to search for leaders of the Tunisian General Federation of Students, an organization with Islamist leanings which was formed a year ago and which has not yet been licensed by the Interior Ministry. However, no members of the executive bureau were arrested. [Text] [Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 27 Feb 87 p 3] 8559

ISLAMIST LEADER DETAINED--On Monday the security forces summoned [Islamic Tendency Movement Leader] Rached Ghannouchi, who had been detained up until the time this issue went to press. This is the second time in the recent past that Ghannouchi has been summoned by the security forces. [Text] [Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 Mar 87 p 3] 8559

CSO: 4504/174

TOP KURDISH GOVERNMENT FIGURE DISCUSSES GOVERNMENT POLICIES

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 11-17 Mar 87 p 11

[Interview with State Minister Hashim Hasan al-'Aqrawi in London: "We Will Soon Collapse"; date not specified]

[Text] The Iraqi minister of state, Hasan Hashim al-'Aqrawi, is considered one of Iraq's long-standing ministers. He was granted this portfolio in the Iraqi government in 1974. At the same time, he is secretary general of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which is in coalition with the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the Kurdistan Revolutionary Party in the domestic and national front. Therefore he is also member of the higher committee of this front.

Minister al-'Aqrawi visited London last week en route to Ghana at the head of an Iraqi delegation to take part in the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of this African country's independence. While he was present in London, our colleague Salih Qallab met him and held the following conversation with him:

[Question] What is your evaluation of the reasons which prompted the Iranians to shift toward the northern front and concentrate the offensive on the Hajj 'Umran area?

[Answer] The Iranians tried their luck in the southern front. Although Basrah remains their main goal, they have sought, through their offensive in the north, to divert people's attention from this goal, and they have also sought to fragment the effort of the Iraqi forces, especially after they were smashed on the southern front and sustained blatant losses. Through this offensive they may have sought to reassure some entities which view an offensive against Basrah differently from the way they view an offensive in the northern fronts.

[Question] However, it has been observed that this offensive, which has been concentrated on the Kurdistan area, is occurring in conjunction with other events in the area, in the wake of the movement of some Kurdish forces.

[Answer] The Kurds opposed to Iraq and the Iraq forces are a handful of people who were betraying the Kurdish people before they betrayed their

nation, Iraq, and the Iranians are trying to use these people on squalid missions proceeding from the premise that they know the geography, riverbeds and roads of the area. The Iranians are using these people just as guides in the vanguard of Khomeyni's guards and the Iranian forces.

However, what this handful is doing cannot hide the fact that the Kurdish people are standing with all their strength to defend their nation against the Iranian forces, and the battles of Banjawayn, Jawarta and Hajj 'Umrān testify to this.

[Question] Do these Kurds have their own units?

[Answer] Yes, they have special units called the defense contingents, but these contingents are an integral part of the Iraqi forces.

[Question] How large is the number of these contingents?

[Answer] Talking on this subject is something that I am not competent to do, but I can stress that all the Kurdish people who are able to bear arms are fighting in the context of these contingents within limits which keep the course of ordinary life progressing.

[Question] It is well known that a republican decree was issued a long time ago making military service not compulsory but rather optional as far as the Kurds are concerned. Are the contingents you mentioned volunteers or in compulsory service?

[Answer] With respect to Iraq, enlistment in the armed forces is not just compulsory service, but indeed is national service. Therefore, in this sense, the Kurds, like other members of the Iraqi people, are concerned to defend their nation and the sovereignty of this nation. In addition to that, they are also concerned to defend the autonomy which was recently realized.

[Question] Some time ago, the Jalal al-Talabani groups merged with the groups of Mas'ud al-Barzani. What is the actual situation in the north of Iraq following this step?

[Answer] Everything that is drawn out of its context loses its relative significance. The Kurds consider the al-Talabani and al-Barzani groups just to be groups of saboteurs. It is well known that al-Talabani has vacillated in his alliances and has gone from place to place, in accordance with his personal benefit and interests and in accordance with who pays him the most. As far as his most recent step goes, that took place after he had become sure that he would lose the legislative assembly elections in the autonomy area (meaning the area of northern Iraq).

I can say, on the basis of long experience in this regard, that the alliance between al-Talabani and al-Barzani will not endure long. They know that already and know that enmity between the two tendencies had deep roots for many years, in the era of Mustafa al-Barzani, the father of Mas'ud al-Barzani. Abundant blood has been shed over the years of this struggle.

[Question] What is the truth about what these people are saying, that they control extensive parts of northern Iraq?

[Answer] I told you that these people's role is restricted to merely being guides alongside the Iranian forces. Therefore, they advance and retreat as these forces advance and retreat. Once again, I can assure you that it is the Kurdish people who are fighting them, not the Iraqi forces. Here I must point out that there has been extensive activity for some Kurdish people these people weaned away to return, now that they have discovered their conspiracies and have been fighting with them over personal interests.

[Question] With respect to the Kurds of Iran, does contact between you and them exist, as a government or as Kurdish parties?

[Answer] The Kurdish people in Iran are suffering doubly from the repression they are subject to, and I am confident that now that the Kurds of Iraq enjoy their national and domestic rights in the context of the regime they constitute a model to be emulated with respect to the Kurds of Iran, who are trying to obtain the same rights. With respect to your question, we do not interfere in the affairs of the Kurds of Iran. They know their interests and circumstances, and it is they who will decide their fate and choose the nature of the relationship between themselves and the Iranian peoples.

[Question] In the recent period, questions have been raised concerning Turkish raids on some of the Kurds' locations in the Turkish-Iraqi border areas. What is the truth about these raids? Did they take place with the knowledge of the Iraqi government?

[Answer] The talk about these raids and the exaggeration of them in this manner consists only of biased allegations which Mas'ud al-Barzani and Jalal al-Talabani are uttering for well known purposes that have been laid bare, whose goal is to influence the members of the Kurdish people to break their solidarity with their government and forces.

[Question] Do you mean that the Turks have not struck within Iraqi territory?

[Answer] They have not. I have not heard of it. Moreover, we, for our part, will not allow any encroachment on Turkish territories, because we respect the border agreements concluded by us and our neighbors, one of which is Turkey.

[Question] The world is being subjected to a crushing economic crisis. The question that is being raised is, what are the repercussions of this crisis on Iraq, especially with the duration of all these years of war?

[Answer] Iraq, certainly, is like any other country. Therefore, it has been affected by this international crisis, especially in light of the drop in oil prices. However, I can nonetheless assert that the Iraqi command is able to arrange the condition of the Iraqi household in the area of war and in the area of development and economic life.

We have been able by following this policy to adjust in the course of the years of the war. What is amazing, in the view of the whole world, is that Iraq, in spite of this destructive war, has been able to preserve the continuity of the development process.

11887

CSO: 4404/299

MANAGING LEAKS IN KNESSET FOREIGN, DEFENSE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED

Tel Aviv BAMAHAHE in Hebrew No 19, 28 Jan 87 p 13

[Article by Mairav Arlozorov: "National Security or Hypocrisy?"]

[Text] When the faucet leaks, says Gid'om Reicher, parliamentary correspondent for YEDI'OT AHARONOT, you have to call a plumber to change the gasket, not arrest the people drinking the water. MK Amnon Lin, Alignment, thinks otherwise. This week, his newly proposed law on secrecy of Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee discussions was read for the first time. The proposed law places the responsibility for publishing secret discussions on the journalists, not on the sources of the leaks. By the way, opposing legislation (placing the responsibility on the source of the leak and not on the journalists), proposed by "Raful," has been rebuffed.

The Knesset bylaws contain several clauses relating to the secrecy of discussions, wherein the source of the leak is subject to punishment by sanctions based on the penal code. Many journalists expressed wonderment as to why there is a need to add an amendment to the existing law, when it is clear from the current situation that the problem is one of enforcement, more than one of legislation. MK Amnon Lin said: "All the clauses of the Knesset bylaws are based on the assumption that we will know who the source of the leak is and that there will be someone to accuse. This is a situation that almost never exists, because a journalist, in the name of ethical considerations, will not divulge his sources. It is very doubtful if there will ever be a government that will allow an investigation by the police or by defense forces to discover who leaked information. Therefore, there is no alternative but to pass a law that will place the responsibility on the publisher."

MK Lin is further suggesting that the law will apply only to the Committee's secret discussions (those which were declared to be such by a majority of Committee members), while other discussions, mostly of a political-diplomatic nature, will be open to the media. MK Simha Dinitz agrees on this point. Dinitz sits with Lin on the Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee, but this is almost the only area of agreement between them: "One does not get rid of the crime by prosecuting he who exploited the criminal, instead of the criminal himself. The source of the leak should be punished, not the publisher." MK Ehud Ulmart, Likud, takes an even stronger stand: "This law represents a hypocritical and sanctimonious viewpoint. Knesset members do not

need a law prohibiting leaks. They should simply stop leaking. In my opinion, there are no leaks on truly sensitive issues from the Foreign and Defense Committee. All the leaks are on political subjects, which need not be secretive. It seems to me that the law is catering to a popular mood, which I am not willing to be a party to.

BAMAHANE: Gid'on Reicher, is there a wave of leaks from the Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee?

Reicher: Definitely not. The fact is that the military censor has almost never been forced to cut material. This shows that the press is not hurting state security.

BAMAHANE: If there was a transgression, who should bear the responsibility, the publisher or the source of the leak?

Reicher: If we compare leaks to robbery, the robber and the buyer of the stolen merchandise are equally guilty. But, in this case, there is no transgression, rather a convenient way of passing information to the public so that the people can decide on the right ballot to put in the box. In any event, the members of the Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee are signing a declaration in which they are obligating themselves to preserve secrecy, and making every leak a crime. Why do they want to send those to jail who do not sign the declaration?

MK Lin rejects the claims raised against his proposed law and the alarms sounding about the impact on democracy. To the claim that there is something distorted in placing the responsibility on the journalist instead of on the source of the leak, he says: "I am not dealing with the issue of justice or injustice to the press, but rather with what is good for state security."

Gid'on Reicher is skeptical. In his opinion, every avid parliamentarian knows that this is much ado about nothing, culminating in nothing. "If the law is passed after all, leaks will still be leaked and journalists will still drink with gusto from the waters of this spring." The fate of the law, according to Reicher, will be like that of the law prohibiting cigarette smoking in public places. He adds: "Like he who adhered to the old laws against revealing a source, I often think about the source of a leak who cries out vehemently against leaks..."

BAMAHANE: Aren't you worried that your work will lead you to be brought to court on criminal charges?

Reicher: To the contrary. My work will lead me to demand a danger allowance from the paper. That is the only way to increase my salary.

9811/13046

CSO: 4423/17

KNESSET DISPUTE OVER SOVIET DELEGATION

Knesset Members Exchange Blows in Front of Soviet Delegation

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 20 Jan 87 p 3

[Article by Yosef Tzuri'el: "Beton to Ge'ulah Kohen: If you Open That Placard, I'll Open Your Head"]

[Text] Boxing experts, not journalists, were needed yesterday in the Knesset to report on the exchange of blows between MK Professor Yuval Ne'eman and MK Me'ir Vilner, and to describe how MK Charlie Beton knocked MK Ge'ulah Kohen to the floor, threatening: "If you open that placard, I'll open up your head." A Soviet delegation came to the Knesset building to meet with Knesset members from the Alignment and other left-wing groups, and together to discuss diplomatic relations, prisoners of Zion, and the emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union.

But already from the beginning of the meeting, tension built up around the presence of the three Soviets, members of the Peace Committee. Representatives of immigrants from the Soviet Union asked to meet with the delegation, if only for a few minutes. MK Ora Namir was the purveyor of this demand. But the Soviets refused, and she informed the immigrants: "I'm sorry. It's impossible." The next chapter was almost too quiet. Around a table, on which there were light refreshments, Soviet and Israeli representatives discussed the reality of relations between the two countries, and what they should be. There was simultaneous interpretation, and there was listening. But there was no agreement.

Then came the violent, boxing episode.

The official meeting ended and the hosts wanted to accompany their guests. It then became clear that this was not a simple matter. At the entrance, the three Soviets were intercepted by Knesset members Ge'ulah Kohen, Yuval Ne'eman and Hayim Drukman.

Ge'ulah Kohen had a placard on which was written: "As long as Jews are persecuted and imprisoned pursuing their right to immigrate to Israel, Soviet delegates are not welcome in this house."

MK Eli'ezer Granot interfered, saying: "These are our private guests."

MK Ge'ulah Kohen replied: "You can entertain private guests in your home. This is home to all of us, even the prisoners of Zion."

With that, a scene began the likes of which even old Knesset members could not remember.

While the Soviet delegation was locked in the room where the meeting had taken place, outside Knesset members engaged in a confrontation.

Knesset member Ge'ulah Kohen, Yuval Ne'eman and Hayim Drukman were not willing to halt the demonstration they had planned against the members of the Soviet delegation.

And members of HADASH in the Knesset--Tupik Tvi, Me'ir Vilner and Charlie Beton--were prepared to protect their guests from the Soviet Union.

Two placards that were being waved by Ge'ulah Kohen and Yuval Ne'eman were forcibly wrenched from their hands.

The two did not give up and picked the pieces up from the floor. On one placard, there were photographs of prisoners of Zion; on the other, fragments of sentences.

The tearing of the placards was not done with kid gloves or polite words. MK Ge'ulah Kohen shouted to the Knesset members from HADASH: "You should be ashamed of yourselves." MK Me'ir Vilner shouted back: "Your'e crazy."

MK Charlie Beton, who last week threatened a KOL ISRAEL correspondent, was even more vehement yesterday. He pushed Ge'ulah Kohen until she fell to the ground.

The members of the Soviet delegation left the Knesset building embarrassed.

Ge'ulah Kohen returned to the cafeteria with her arm bandaged.

A discussion developed among the Knesset members concerning whether this was the way to behave toward guests, and to what degree Ge'ulah Kohen had exaggerated, and what about Charlie Beton's behavior.

MK Hayim Drukman said that he could not put up with it any longer, and he expressed a letter to Knesset chairman Shlomo Kilel in which he demanded a thorough clarification of the incident.

MK Ge'ulah Kohen wants at least one thing: an answer to the question of why the ushers interfered only after she was already on the ground, not before.

Likud chairman Hayim Kaufman composed a statement in which he asks that MK Charlie Beton be expelled from the Knesset for one year.

Shlomo Hilel publicized this statement: Statements and behavior that are unbecoming for the level of the Knesset are a new phenomenon, and in my opinion, if we do not do everything that is required, we will find ourselves degenerating to the lowest level of democracy.

"I have asked the Knesset's legal advisor to prepare an amendment that will authorize the Knesset chairman or the Knesset committee to impose sanctions on a Knesset member for unbecoming behavior outside of, and not just within, the Knesset, as stated by law.

"A situation was created where the Knesset was turned into the Zion Square of demonstrations--a dangerous phenomenon which, if we do not know the limits, will bring the kind of degeneration that I have warned about in the past."

MK's Explain Their Actions

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 20 Jan 87 p 3

[Article by Yosef Tzuri'el: "To Behave Like This, MK Fighting with MK, and For Whom?"]

[Text] MK Ge'ulah Kohen, after the incident, said: "An intolerable situation was created in the Knesset. What, after all, did I do? I wanted to quietly protest the arrival of the Soviet delegation to the Knesset. And look at the behavior this stimulated on the part of supporters of the Soviet regime in the Knesset. Who was at the head but Charlie Beton, who, since he has been in the Knesset has created a violent atmosphere and has used violence. The proof is here in my bandaged arm."

MK Hayim Drukman: "Such shame. For one Knesset member to attack another Knesset member, and for whom? For the cursed respect, ostensibly, of members of a Soviet delegation. I say with sadness: If we have reached this point, how much further will we go?"

MK Charlie Beton: "It is true that I told MK Ge'ulah Kohen: 'Nothing will help you. Even if there were 10 Knesset members, I would rip your placard, it is my right.' But she responded hysterically, and threw herself on the ground, flailing her arms and legs, as if who knows what happened to her. But when Charlie Beton says this, who will believe him? The people will believe Ge'ulah Kohen. And the people will believe Yuval Ne'eman, who punched me in the face, and I did not punch him back."

9811/13046

CSO: 4423/17

BRIEFS

TRADE DEFICIT UP 50 PERCENT--A large increase in Israel's trade deficit was recorded over the past few months. For the period from October to December 1986, the deficit in Israel's balance of trade rose 50 percent, as compared with the average monthly level of the deficit during the first half of 1986. During the months of June-December 1986, the deficit increased 30 percent as compared with its level for the first half of the year. This is what appears in the data provided by the Central Bureau of Statistics. For the entire 1986 year, the deficit increased nearly 22 percent as compared with its 1985 level. In the 1986 year, Israel's trade deficit came to \$2.4 billion, versus \$1.9 billion in 1985, and \$2.5 billion in 1984. The increased trade deficit for 1986 emanated from a 15.7 percent increase in imports, which in part caused an increase of 13.8 percent in net exports. A spokesman for the Central Bureau of Statistics pointed out yesterday that a decrease in world oil prices moderated the increased trade deficit. The data from the Bureau further show that net exports of goods in the month of December 1986 amounted to \$728 million. Looking at the data factored for seasonal fluctuations, it therefore appears that in the months of November-December 1986, exports---excluding diamonds---fell by close to 17 percent, as compared with the monthly average for September-October 1986. This decrease brought export levels for the last 2 months of 1986 back to the levels of the beginning of the year, this following an increase in exports during July-September. [Text] [Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 11 Jan 87 p 1] 9811/13046

CSO: 4423/17

AL-RA'Y URGES U.S. TO ACCEPT MIDEAST CONFERENCE

JN090947 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 9 Apr 87 p 1

[Editorial: "The Ball Is in the U.S. Court"]

[Text] In talks marked by frankness, Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i stressed the Jordanian stand when he met with U.S. State Secretary Shultz. This stand believes that genuine peace in our region requires the convening of an international conference attended by the five permanent UN Security Council member states as well as the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It is clear that this emphasis also expresses the Arab stand and the will of the great majority of the international community members. Consequently, this emphasis is in essence a call addressed to the U.S. Administration to play a constructive role to help convene the conference as the indispensable way to achieve the aspired peace.

It should be recalled that Washington has announced more than once that it is committed to genuine action to attain regional peace. It is time for Washington to turn its commitment into a sincere response to the call for the conference. This call urges a conference which should play a real role in attaining the required peace rather than being confined to a form of protocol.

What draws attention is that at a time when the call addressed to Washington in this regard is being concentrated, represented by the Jordanian move and the European response, the Soviet Union continues to affirm its support for the convening of an international conference as well as its insistence on participating in it. Once again the Soviet Union conveyed this stand to Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in the meeting held in Rome yesterday between Peres and the deputy chief of the Middle East Department of the CPSU Central Committee. It is also noted that the USSR deputy foreign minister has decided to tour the region this month to support the call for an international conference. All of these signs give the impression that the international desire for the convening of this conference is a genuine desire which is stronger now than ever before.

Therefore, the ball is in the U.S. court. It is demanded, before the international community, that Washington proceed toward the international conference and toward a genuine regional peace, especially since there are no objective pretexts Washington can use to prevent the convening of this conference.

AL-RA'Y HOPES FOR U.S. SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE

JN080951 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 8 Apr 87 pp 1, 22

[Editorial: "The Jordanian Efforts in the European and U.S. Arenas"]

[Text] During his meeting with the Belgian foreign relations minister, King Husayn reaffirmed the Jordanian position toward the Middle East crisis which is based on reaching a just and comprehensive solution to the crisis through holding the international conference. As in the Netherlands, Belgian officials supported the idea of convening the conference and affirmed desire to continue this support by launching intensive political activities. These activities will be demonstrated during the Belgian foreign relations minister's tour to Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Israeli entity. It is certain that the minister will bring with him the Brussels statement, since it represents a clear and comprehensive position supporting every effort to convene the international conference.

King Husayn is scheduled to meet with British Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher in London. They will discuss the Middle East crisis, the Jordanian position toward this crisis and the endeavors to convene the international conference. The British position which became clear through the Brussels statement, and the British prime minister's talks recently with Soviet officials, will certainly contribute to the efforts to convene the international conference.

So much for the European arena. As for the U.S. arena, the contacts and talks held by Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i and Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri yesterday and today with senior U.S. administration officials constitute the last stage [of contacts]. On the results of these talks with U.S. officials hinge convening the conference, as well as all the efforts to attain a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Any clear, open and unconditional U.S. support for the conference would constitute an important step in the course of the contacts and endeavors being exerted. By support we do not mean welcoming the idea of holding the international conference but confirming that this conference comes in response to international legitimacy, and to ensure that every side abides by its resolutions particularly those dealing with the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. We hope that Washington will adopt this position and that this opportunity will not be wasted. This

position represents respect for principles, peace and for peoples' right to remain on their homeland. It also represents respect for the United Nations, its charter and resolutions. Any position contravening this view is opposed to justice and peace and toward the side whose land and identity have been subjected to aggression and which has been targeted by various forms of aggression and terrorism--whose consequences threaten regional and world peace.

/8309

CSO: 4400/196

AL-DUSTUR: KING'S VISITS AIM TO UNIFY STAND ON CONFERENCE

JN051121 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 5 Apr 87 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "For the Sake of Realizing a Common Arab Perspective"]

[Text] The short working visit of His Majesty King Husayn to fraternal Morocco which began yesterday comes as a prelude to the European tour which His Majesty will embark upon in the next few days, with the aim of enlisting further support for the idea of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict.

There is no doubt that his majesty's visits to some Arab capitals which have materialized on the eve of this European tour seek, first and foremost, to achieve a common Arab perspective and a unified Arab understanding of the international conference idea which has recently gained growing support from the international community.

Whenever progress is achieved in the efforts which seek to help convene the international conference and whenever the adversaries of this conference approach the moment of truth concerning the inevitability of succumbing to the negotiation option, it becomes incumbent upon the Arabs to work diligently to unify their stands and close their political ranks so that they can enter the conference holding identical views on their supreme pan-Arab objective.

The Arabs' task in the international conference arena, if it were to be held in the foreseeable future, will not be an easy one because of the number of issues which will be on its agenda and also due to the nature of our enemy who certainly enjoys the support and backing of a superpower such as the United States. This emphasizes once again the importance of unifying the Arab stand in the midst of current moves.

Hence, Jordan under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn has always worked to unify Arab ranks and restore lost solidarity, since this is one of the most important weapons that can be utilized to defend Arab rights and wrest them from the claws of an enemy who has always wagered on the continuation of differences and dissension among the Arabs.

Thus, when we successfully make a stride on the long and complicated road leading to the desired international conference, we must make a similar stride on the road toward Arab solidarity. This issue is important because any progress on the road to the convocation of such a conference will, in the absence of a unified Arab stand, prevent us from achieving the desired end and will also prevent those with legitimate rights from attaining these rights.

AL-RA'Y URGES UNIFIED ARAB CONCEPT OF CONFERENCE

JN050954 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 5 Apr 87 pp 1, 24

[Editorial: "A Unified Arab Concept of the International Conference"]

[Text] At a time when there is an acceleration and intensification of the efforts seeking to enlist further support for the international conference, the need arises now more than ever for a crystallization of a unified Arab concept of the conference. While the U.S.-Israeli concept of the conference, if it were to become a reality, stipulates that it be no more than a forum or a prelude to direct negotiations or that it be a venue for protocol procedures that precede these negotiations, without having any role in the negotiations or in specifying the objectives of the negotiations, we note that a completely different Arab concept has emerged. The Arab concept stipulates that the international conference is the apparatus which must be entrusted with the task of implementing UN resolutions which state that it is inadmissible to retain others' territories by force and that the Palestinian people be granted their right to self-determination on their own soil. At the same time, former U.S. President Carter presented a third concept of the international conference. His concept stipulates that the conference must not be a permanent umbrella for negotiations and that its role be reduced to that of providing help once negotiations face obstacles and also to providing financial assistance modelled on the Marshall Plan to the Arabs and Israel once these negotiations succeed.

Thus, we notice a big discrepancy among the three concepts of the international conference. This discrepancy emphasizes the need for the Arabs to agree on a unified concept, to declare this concept, and to adhere to it in their endeavors which seek to help convene the conference.

Undoubtedly, the desired concept of the conference which the Arabs should agree on is the one which stipulates that the conference play a positive role in securing Israel's acceptance of UN resolutions which state that Israeli forces must withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and that the Palestinian people be given the chance to exercise their right to self-determination on their land. The problem does not lie in the need for preludes for negotiations

or for protocol procedures for these negotiations. In fact, the problem lies in the need to exercise an international role that would lead to the Israeli forces' withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and to the realization of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination on their soil. We believe that the international conference is the venue for such a role which must yield useful and specific results.

We are dutybound to warn against any delay in reaching an agreement on the Arab concept of the international conference and in declaring that concept, because it is not in the interest of the Arabs to leave conflicting concepts articulated without presenting our own. This issue is important because the conference is not an end in itself; it is a means to the restoration of the usurped Arab rights and to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Hence, Arab interests make it imperative that an Arab summit be held to obtain a consensus on this unified concept and to declare this concept, thus leaving no room for Arab differences regarding the conference if it were to be held. If the conference were to be held without the Arabs reaching an agreement on the desired unified concept, nobody can know for sure the results in the Arab arena. Frankly, we believe that the international conference must not be allowed to turn into a timebomb that explodes Arab differences. This conference must be utilized to restore Arab rights, and this objective can only be achieved through prior agreement on a unified Arab concept that specifies the role and responsibilities of the international conference.

/8309

CSO: 4400/196

AL-DUSTUR URGES EC, ARAB SUPPORT OF CONFERENCE

JN110824 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 11 Apr 87 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "Jordanian Move and the British Position"]

[Text] Concluding a European tour in London, His Majesty King Husayn told Margaret Thatcher Jordan would carry on with its endeavors on behalf of a UN-sponsored international Mideast peace conference to be attended by the five permanent UN Security Council members in addition to the parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Undoubtedly the support which the proposed international conference has received from the EC countries, including Britain, has encouraged Jordan to strive to remove the obstacles before it, the American one being foremost among them. Top-ranking U.S. officials have a bias toward the Israeli position and, more particularly, the Likud standpoint.

The UK for quite a while stood closer to the United States than to the European community, but Jordanian diplomacy led by His Majesty King Husayn ultimately produced a positive shift in Mrs Thatcher's policies on the Mideast, especially regarding the proposed international conference for which Jordan is anxious to garner the fullest possible support.

Jordan considers London's support for the proposed conference a development of major significance because of Britain's weight in the European arena and the closeness of its policies to those of the United States, as well as the fact it is a permanent UN Security Council member.

Jordan's intensive, broad efforts in the past few days to turn the international conference option into a practical reality could do with further practical support, not just from the EC nations, including Britain, but from the Arab states which are agreed on the need for such a parley, being the one and only choice under the circumstances.

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CSO: 4400/196

JORDAN

AL-RA'Y ON ISRAELI 'PROPAGANDA' ON SOVIET JEWS

JN021308 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 2 Apr 87

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Moscow and Soviet Jewish Emigration" AL-RA'Y says: It appears the Israeli authorities and their propaganda media are trying to form an impression among Arabs that a great change in USSR policy concerning the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel will soon take place and that large numbers of Jews will arrive in Israel in the near future.

AL-RA'Y says: We must point out first that this impression should be encountered by caution at the Arab level, particularly since the Soviet stand, which considers this subject as an internal Soviet affair, has not changed. The Soviet stand, which also refuses to bargain on this subject in return for USSR's participation in the peace process, is a firm principled stand. Therefore, it is better for the Arabs to take into consideration Israel's ill intentions which aim at marring Arab-Soviet relations and casting doubts on the seriousness of the Soviet stand on the Arab question. In view of this the Arabs should not get involved by forming this evil impression which Israeli organs are trying to spread in order to shake confidence in the Soviet stand. However, caution must not in any way prevent the Arabs from contacting Moscow to make sure of its continued positive stand and its call for foiling Israel's campaigns of casting doubts in a decisive and open manner.

AL-RA'Y says: No one has forgotten the pledges made by the Soviet parliamentary delegation to Jordanian officials during its recent visit and during which it reaffirmed its endeavors to convene the international conference and to support Jordan's efforts in this regard. There is no doubt that Moscow is fully aware of the Arab stand on the subject of Soviet Jewish emigration to occupied Palestine--emigration which the Israeli aggressors welcome and use as support for continuing their aggression and as a source of further manpower to help carry out their wicked plans.

AL-RA'Y concludes: Needless to say, Moscow fully understands the serious contradiction between the support it has pledged for building just and comprehensive peace in the region and opening doors for Jewish emigrants with whom Israel wants to replace the Palestinians and use as instruments of destruction for wasting peace prospects in the region.

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CSO: 4400/196

OFFICIAL DETAILS SUPPORT FOR GAZA PROJECTS

JN081532 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 7 Apr 87

[Telephone statement by Hisham Al-Shawwa, adviser to the minister of occupied territory affairs for Gaza Strip affairs, carried within the "Occupied Homeland; News and Views" program; date not given--recorded]

[Text] The subcommittee of the higher committee for occupied territory affairs met under the deputy prime minister last Thursday, 2 April 1987, and finally approved the development projects presented by the charity committee for the Gaza Strip. The subcommittee decided the following: On support for teachers' salaries, it has been decided to disburse 25-35 dinars for all teachers and employees of the official schools in the Gaza Strip. The number of teachers and employees benefiting from this is 2,731. Funds to support teachers have been transferred to the Cairo-Amman Bank in Nabulus to cover the last 3 months. Payment will be on 15 April. Thereafter it will be on a monthly basis as of 1 May.

As for the development projects, the subcommittee approved the disbursement of 1,524,000 dinars for development projects in the Gaza Strip. These projects are in the sectors of housing, agriculture, handicrafts, and health, education, and social affairs. Necessary procedures for the transfer of funds to the Cairo-Amman Bank have actually begun in order to begin disbursement. During this stay in Amman, the head of the charity committee presented to the ministry the second list of projects for the Gaza Strip. The projects are now being studied by the competent ministry organs.

The approved sum of 1,524,000 will be used to cover projects as follows: 20,000 dinars for a water project in Al-qarrarah village; 4,000 dinars to finish construction of a kindergarten and social center in Khuza'ah village; 22,000 dinars to build a water reservoir in Khuza'ah; 18,000 dinars to establish an internal water network in Khuza'ah; 8,000 dinars to pave the Al-siddiq road in Khuza'ah; 65,000 dinars to finance the purchase of five ambulances for the Gaza area that are part of a central first aid station project which includes 16 ambulances that will be purchased in the future; 45,000 dinars to buy a mobile x-ray system for the Khan Yunis orthopedics hospital; 50,000 dinars to finance x-ray equipment and blood and eye testing equipment for the friends of patients society in Gaza; 30,000 dinars for the

home for the elderly and disabled in Gaza to repair the building and rebuild its club; 5,000 dinars for the friends of the blind society to buy Braille typewriters; 30,000 dinars to repair the Gaza College building and reopen the commercial and secretarial department at the college; 120,000 dinars to rebuild the Al-karmil Secondary School, one of the oldest schools in the Gaza Strip; 12,000 dinars to repair the Gaza Sports Club and build a library in it, and 230,000 dinars to finance the construction of a permanent headquarters for the charity committee.

As for agriculture, 384,000 dinars will be disbursed to provide agricultural project loans, promote farms, and establish greenhouse farms and 112,000 dinars to support craftsmen and small businessmen.

One of the most important projects in Gaza is housing. Some 387,276 dinars have been allocated for the housing sector. Anyone wishing to benefit from this project must have the permission of the competent authorities.

All these funds, which amount to 1,524,000 dinars, are in support of development projects, in addition to the support for teachers which I mentioned at the beginning of the statement.

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CSO: 4400/196

JORDAN

AL-DUSTUR ON 'LANDMARK' HUSAYN-AL-ASAD TALKS

JN040755 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 4 Apr 87 pp 1, 27

[Editorial: "Jordanian-Syrian Summit"]

[Text] Within the framework of Jordan's moves to forge an Arab stand capable of expediting convening an international Mideast peace conference, yesterday's visit to Damascus by His Majesty King Husayn and his talks with his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad constitute a landmark along the road which will go through many Arab and foreign capitals during the next few days.

At this juncture, Jordanian-Syrian consultations assume a unique and double importance, given the location of Amman and Damascus on the map of the political forces concerned with an international conference and the enormous pan-Arab responsibilities shouldered by the two sisterly countries in confronting the common Zionist enemy.

There is no question that Jordan's moves, which will peak this week, are underpinned by an Arab consensus on the concept of an international conference--a common Arab approach being a key element of Jordan's diplomatic campaign in world decision-making capitals. Hence the need for consultations and coordination between Jordan and its Arab brethren to continue.

We view His Majesty King Husayn's brief working visit to Damascus and the talks between the Jordanian and Syrian leaderships at this critical juncture as a practical embodiment of the status of the bilateral relations which are based on the firm foundations of a shared understanding of this particular time and its political requirements.

Hopeful that King Husayn's visit to Damascus will advance joint Arab action in the interest of Arab causes, including an international conference, we are fully convinced that both Amman and Damascus, because of their special weight and their great pan-Arab responsibilities, will succeed and make headway if they take the same road, given they are driven by a resolve to further Arab interests.

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CSO: 4400/196

AL-DUSTUR: AL-SHAWWA ON CONFERENCE, TEACHERS' SALARIES

JN021222 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 2 Apr 87 pp 30, 25

[By Hamdan al-Haj]

[Text] Amman--Rashad al-Shawwa, former Gaza mayor who was deposed by the occupation authorities, expects increased possibilities of holding an international Middle East peace conference if the United States accepts the idea of this conference. He pointed out that the United States will explain its final stand on this conference within the next 2 weeks. Al-shawwa expressed his belief that 1987 would be the year of an international conference. He added that with the Israeli coalition government it is 30 percent toward peace but the percentage may be greatly increased if all efforts are concerted to convene this conference.

In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR, al-Shawwa said that if Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres is serious in requesting the convening of this conference, then this could cause the Israeli Government to be dissolved after which new elections would be held and then future events could not be predicted.

Replying to a question on Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's visit to the region and on the stand adopted by the occupied territory's leaders in their meetings with Carter, Al-shawwa explained that all those who met with Carter favored an international conference that would have an effective weight on events in the region. He indicated that Carter's stand was in harmony with this demand and that Carter asserted to them that all Arab countries accept the convening of this conference, that he is moving to promote this idea, and that the real aim of his tour constitutes a practical step toward peace.

Asked his opinion of the construction of an Arab port in the Gaza Strip, Al-shawwa said this idea and the talk about it are premature and that there is no need for this port at the present time because the volume of work is small and does not justify the construction of a port despite the fact that such a port would represent a huge Arab move which might serve all Arab countries close to the Gaza Strip and the occupied Arab territories.

Asked his opinion of Israel's termination of the occupied Jerusalem Electricity Company's concession, Al-Shawwa noted that Israel is occupying the West Bank and Gaza Strip by force; hence, it is not strange that Israel imposes anything it likes on any Arab installation there. Israel will go ahead and seize this company, he added. He said the strongest party that can, and is able, to file a lawsuit at the International Court of Justice is the Jordanian Government whereas filing any lawsuit at the Israeli Supreme Court of Justice will not be in the company's interest.

Asked about his recent visit to Amman, Al-shawwa asserted that it realized many achievements. In the next 2 days, he said, funds allocated to supporting the teachers' steadfastness in the Gaza Strip who were appointed after 1967 will be transferred. These funds total approximately 286,000 dinars, he said, in addition to other funds allocated to supporting industrial, trade, agricultural, and other sectors. Those having the right to benefit from these funds will do so in accordance with priorities, he added.

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CSO: 4400/196

NATION'S FISH RESOURCES, DEVELOPMENT REVIEWED

Amman AL-YARMUK in Arabic No 18, 1987, pp 36-39

[Article by Dr Ahmad al-'Absi: "Fish Resources in Jordan"]

[Text] Fish constitute a part of the natural and economic resources of the country in which they are located, and if they are wisely exploited they can be a cornerstone in the structure of self-sufficiency in food in that country.

It is well known that fish are considered a good source of protein in human food and are distinguished from other types of meat by a high level of vitamins and minerals and a low level of fats and calories, which are important to the health of the consumer.

Fish occupy second place, after red meat (such as beef and lamb) and white meat (such as poultry), in terms of their volume of consumption in Jordan. The per capita rate of consumption of fish in Jordan comes to about 2.5 kilograms a year, a low figure if compared with the international figure, which is about 18 kilograms a year. The quantity of fish consumed in Jordan in 1985 came to 7,000 tons, of which about 3,225 tons of frozen and refrigerated fish were imported from Oman, Kuwait, Korea and Argentina and 2,963 tons of canned fish from countries like Morocco, Italy and Spain. The value of foreign fish imports came to about 3.7 million dinars.

Quantities of Fish Produced Locally

One can categorize the quantities of fish produced locally in 1985 in accordance with their source, estimated in tons, as follows:

1. Fishing, from:

The Jordan River and the East al-Ghur Canal, 145.0 tons.

The al-Yarmuk river, 1.5 tons.

The King Talal Dam, 5.5 tons.

Al-Azraq, 0.1 tons.

The Gulf of al-'Aqabah, 30 tons.

Total 182.1 tons.

Fish raising:

Ministry of Agriculture ponds (al-Azraq)	0.5 tons	2.0 donums
Arab fish (al-Manshiyah)	40.0 tons	17.0 donums
'Abd-al-Majid al-Shuraydah (Dayr Abu Sa'id)	10.0 tons	6.0 donums
Nuh Agricultural (the al-Buq'ah-Jarash road)	3.0 tons	7.0 donums
Rihal al-Wishahi and Ghazi al-Ghazawi (Wadi al-Yabis)	15.0 tons	15 donums
Faysal al-Tabba' (South al-Shunah)	0.5 tons	0.2 donums
al-Rayyan Farm (Wadi al-Rayyan)	2.0 tons	5.0 donums
Wajih 'Atallah (Shaykh Husayn)	3.0 tons	4.0 donums
Husayn Khayrallah (al-Baqurah)	1.0 tons	2.0 donums
The Jordanian University farm (Wadi al-Yabisah)	1.0 tons	2.0 donums
Ahmad Furayhat (Kafr Najjah)	--	3.0 donums
Total	76.0	58.4 donums

(These statistics were provided by the special effort of the writer of the article through direct contact with fishermen and owners of farms after the study of various Ministry of Agriculture publications.)

Thus the quantities of fish produced locally through fishing and farming in 1985 came roughly to about 300 tons or less. Through a simple calculation, it is clear that local fish production's share of total consumption does not exceed 5 percent, that a donum of intensified farming (the Arab fish farm, for example) can produce more than 2 tons and, with ordinary farming (the raising ponds in the other farms), production per donum is less than a ton.

Statistical Problems

Accurate statistics on the quantities of fish caught or raised in Jordan or fish which it is expected will be produced are not available, and that may be attributed to the following:

1. Change in the quantities of production from one season to another, the failure of actual conditions to correspond to expectations at times, and constant change in the number and area of ponds from year to year.

2. The absence of a single statistical organization or single responsible body to tabulate all production from various sources. Indeed, there is no coordination in this regard among the various departments. For example the military intelligence department in Irbid and al-Salt is in charge of supervising the issuance of permits for fishing in the al-Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers, and the Jordanian fish company and the coast guard are in charge of supervising fishing by boat in the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. As to oversight of the raising of fish in fresh water, the livestock production department in the Ministry of Agriculture takes charge of that.

3. The lack of knowledge by the owners of the farms themselves (especially the owners of open dirt pond farms) of the volume of spawn issued or the numbers of females that exist, and their ignorance of means for estimating reserves and the amount that is expected to be produced in the coming season. For example, a farmer who has a pond 10 donums in area might think that it will produce 100 tons, which is not reasonable in the circumstances of farming followed.

Types of Economically Viable Fish

The types of economically viable fish that are caught in fresh or salty water and are raised in ponds are the following:

The white comb (*tilapia anrea*), which is raised in the Jordan River, the Zaqlab Dam, the Wadi al-Hadithah Dam, al-Azraq, and the 'Abd-al-Majid al-Shuraydah, Nuh agricultural, Hamdi al-Tabba', al-Wishahi, al-Ghazawi and al-Rayyan farms.

The black or Nile comb (*tilapia Nilotica*), which is raised in the areas above in addition to the King Talal Dam.

The Tiberian comb (*tilapia Gallilae*), in the Jordan River and the East al-Ghawr Canal.

The al-'Azazi comb (*Tilapia Zilli*), in the Jordan River and al-Azraq.

Carp (*cyprino carpio*), which is a type that is not local and has started to proliferate in the waters of the Jordan River, King Talal Dam, the Ministry of Agriculture ponds in al-Azraq and some other farms.

The qishri (*barbus canis*), in the al-Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers, King Talal Dam, al-Azraq and 'Ayn al-Qaniyah (Jarash). These can exist in farms prepared for various kinds of comb fish.

The al-karsinah (*barbus longiceps*), in the al-Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers.

The al-hafadi (*capoeta Damascina*) in the al-Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers and all dams (except for al-Kafrayn) and watercourses (except for al-Zarqa').

The al-balbut or al-qattah (*clarias lazera*), in the al-Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers, the King Talal Dam and al-Azraq. There is thought of adding this to some farms.

Different types of fish caught in the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. These include some dozen of the 750 types of fish that are present in the Gulf. These include types that are desirable to the consumer, such as the families of red mullet, (sabhanah), (shu'ur), (banqas), albacore, tuna, striped mullet, coral trout and so on.

Ocean fish are considered more popular among consumers than freshwater fish because of their distinctive flavor and their distinctive food, since they contain more salts, although they are higher in price than freshwater fish.

Important Factors for Success

To make any economic project founded on the production of fish resources succeed, important elements must be present such as clean water, the ground on which the project is to be established and modern technology, in addition to other factors such as the availability of different types of fish that are desired by consumers, distribution potential, the presence of fodder and so forth. These elements enter into the calculations of the economic feasibility of the project. However, the most important of these factors by far is that of water. The fish farmer deals with living organisms, not with productive material only, and fish will not live in any water source; they are very sensitive to water temperature, oxygen ratios and the presence of pollutants. If it is hoped of any economic project that it continue to produce for a long period, an inexhaustible source of water which is not exposed to pollution must be available.

In general, the factor of water is present in Jordan in various forms:

1. Fresh water.

A. Flowing, as with the waters of rivers and watercourses.

B. Stagnant, as with the waters of ponds, dams and swamps.

2. Salt water: the water of the Gulf of Al-'Aqabah.

If it is hoped to have a fish raising project established, it should give consideration to the categorization of water by type according to its sources, which are:

1. Groundwater:

A. Artesian wells.

B. Springs.

2. Surface water, gathered from rainwater:

A. Rivers and watercourses.

B. Ponds and dams.

Either of the two water sources (groundwater and surface water) may be used, but we could face difficulties in our use of either of these two sources.

The problem with groundwater is that it is exposed to pumping and depletion because of the increased drilling of artesian wells and the pumping of springwater for human household uses. The problem with surface water is that it is exposed to pollution by human wastes and refuse from man's factories and agricultural pursuits. For these considerations, establishing an economic project with a high productive capacity of fish that is dependent on one of these sources as a permanent source of water entails extreme risk. The quantities of water in Jordan are small, unstable and subject to depletion and pollution. The experience which the Arab fish company farm in al-Manshiyah is going through is proof of that. The farm was established on the most modern scientific methods of fish cultivation and uses developed techniques for that. It is clear that the problem lies in the nature of the water, which is supplied for the most part directly from the Jordan River. The imported comb fish which are raised in the farm cannot normally endure a drop in water temperature below 12 degrees, silt increases the difficulty of feeding the fish, and these fish remain at the mercy of the materials the waters of the river bring.

If we assume that the current state of inequitable pumping of ground and surface water will continue, as well as the pollution of surface waters by man (and there are no signs that these practices will be halted), the best option for establishing a large economic project to produce fish is still restricted to the waters of the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. It will be possible to bring this about after solving the problem of determining priorities in exploiting the limited Jordanian seacoast (29 kilometers) in cooperation with the Arab countries looking out over the Gulf of al-'Aqabah. In the context of the raising of fish in fresh water, the approach of building numerous small farms remains less risky than the establishment of large ones.

A View of the Future

In the light of the current situation, it is not possible to cover the local market's fish requirements by fresh water or ocean fishing, even if fishing activities are intensified, because the quantities of fish naturally available and capable of economic exploitation are limited. Not even the establishment of fishing companies in cooperation with neighboring Arab countries will cover the requirements of the market, and such companies cannot keep functioning for a long time, for a simple reason, which is that the quantities of fish available in economic amounts in the Gulf will be depleted in a few years under the pressure of intensified fishing. On the basis of my knowledge of the fish in al-'Aqabah, these require a long time to reproduce and grow before reaching market size. Raising such fish in private marine farms (by establishing ponds on the coast or making inlets, or by means of floating cages) would be preferable. In the past successful experiments have been carried out in floating cages in the gulf to raise (subhanah), striped mullet and other fish.

Therefore, any effort to develop fish raising must be comprehensive and concentrated, especially as far as sources and volumes of water are concerned. I believe that if it is hoped that fish resources will play a more important role in the desired self-sufficiency in food and in meeting the requirements of the market through what is produced locally, the following

considerations, which the article covers with an overall glance, are of maximum importance:

1. A halt to the ongoing practices of inequitable, unnecessary pumping of groundwater and water from springs, so that a search for alternative sources for human uses of water in which living organisms live will take place, followed by an insistence on issuing and applying laws which will guarantee that surface waters are not polluted. At that point, it will be possible to use the large volumes of the dams that have been erected to raise different kinds of fish.
2. Encouragement of the establishment of small fish farms by the private sector in the al-Aghwar areas to increase production, as has happened with respect to poultry production. This requires the presence of technical personnel in the Ministry of Agriculture to offer advice which will guarantee the development of this resource.
3. Establishment of a complete specialized section in the department of livestock production in the Ministry of Agriculture which will take charge of the affairs of fishing area supervision, fish importation, the issuance of fishing permits, fish farm supervision, guidance, statistics and the preparation of development plans in this regard.
4. Cooperation between the department of livestock production in the Ministry of Agriculture and biologists in the Jordanian universities and the department of the environment in enumerating skilled personnel, first of all, then preparing scientific, economic and environmental studies before establishing any economic project that is aimed at fish resources.
5. Use of types of fish that are available locally and desired by Jordanian consumers and avoidance of the introduction of types of fish or other water organisms even if the purpose is to raise them in closed farms, lest these foreign types affect the natural balance in local water environments.

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CSO: 4404/310

JORDAN

BRIEFS

FRENCH CONTRIBUTIONS TO WEST BANK--Amman--Jean Souprina, technical assistant to the head of the French Foreign Ministry's Cooperation Department, has said France has decided to increase its contribution to the social and economic development plan for the occupied territories from Fr4 million to FR10 million per year. This came when the French official was received by Dr Ahmad al-Qatanani, under secretary of the Occupied Territories Affairs Ministry, at his office today. Souprina said he will leave for the occupied West Bank next Wednesday to acquaint himself with the sectors the French Government has decided to support within the framework of the social and economic development plan. During the meeting Al-Qatanani reviewed the social and economic development plan for the occupied Arab territories. [Text] [Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Apr 87] /8309

CSO: 4400/196

MUFTI KHALID DISCUSSES SECURITY IN BEIRUT

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 13 Mar 87 pp 16, 17

[Interview with Mufti Khalid by Sharbal Zaghib: "The Security of the Green Line and the Suburbs is Conditional upon Local and Regional Agreement"; date not specified]

[Text] The mufti of the republic, Shaykh Hasan Khalid takes every opportunity to stress the necessity of extending the influence of legitimate authority throughout the entire Lebanese territory and of ridding the people of the power of the militias, which do nothing but harm citizens' security, livelihood and way of life. At all the Islamic summits that have been held in Beirut and Damascus, he always repeated his convictions and demanded that the legitimate regular army take the place of the combatants in the streets.

Now, after the implementation of the security plan in West Beirut, Mufti Khalid believes that legitimate security [forces] must come to encompass all Lebanese regions, even if step by step. He has called for the necessity of establishing security throughout Beirut, with the agreement of the legitimate Lebanese and Syrian security forces, and the distribution of tasks among them, in preparation for the success of the anticipated political plans that may soon be crowned by a summit between President Amin Jumayyil and Hafiz al-Asad.

AL-HAWADITH interviewed the mufti of the republic in his office at Dar al-Fatwa.

[Question] How do you view the current security and political situation politically since the implementation of the Beirut security plan?

[Answer] Those who lived in West Beirut during the period preceding the current events, who lived through these events, and whom God ordained that they survive doubtlessly appreciate greatly the situation that we are in today and believe that it has ended well. God has granted them much good after they survived much sorrow and suffering. The current situation can never be measured by the past situation. Thank God, a power has appeared on the territory that says to every citizen that there is an authority that prevents terrorism and abnormal practices. Of course, we do not mean to say that the authority has fully completed its tasks. However, it has limited the anxiety that resulted from the chaos that prevailed and provided a modicum of

order and social tranquility. Today a person can walk in the street knowing that an eye is watching him and watching others and that he and others will be treated equally. There are no people ruling with their weapons because they belong to a party, movement or militia. These groups no longer have the ability to act as they were acting before. This is a good thing for all citizens, because it helps them think of the future and how to face the burdens of life.

[Question] Your Eminence, there remains the problem of the green line and the problem of southern Beirut. Will the security plan remain at the limits it has reached or will it be extended to the remaining two regions?

[Answer] The answer to this question doubtlessly requires the discussion of a very important point, which is that what the Syrian forces have done so far in the western region has been limited to security matters, to collecting weapons and preventing their owners from using them as a means of tyranny, blackmail and aggression against people. The result of this has been the return of daily life to normal.

As for the question of the green line and the other areas, this depends upon an inter-Lebanese agreement and thus on Lebanese-Syrian agreement. If the inter-Lebanese negotiations that are now being held under Syrian auspices succeed, everyone will find a common denominator and establish the points of acceptable formulas. This will undoubtedly allow everyone to regain their confidence and peace of mind and will help to pave the way for the next phase during which the obstacles among the Lebanese are removed.

In order to achieve what you are asking about, there must be a political plan that calls for the success of the inter-Lebanese negotiations, provided that Lebanese-Syrian relations improve enough to help achieve what we all desire.

[Question] To be specific, Your Eminence, in the southern sector, there are two forces, Hizballah and the Palestinian camps, each one of which is linked to regional powers. Do you think that the security plan of the southern sector is a result of local agreement or regional agreement?

[Answer] The situation of the southern sector is somewhat different from that of the green line and of the current situation in Beirut. In the sector there are now a number of forces, not only two. There are Hizballah, Amal, the Sixth Banner, and the Palestinian camps. There may also be other forces that have not been revealed yet. The forces that I have mentioned have their own dimensions, policies and strategies. They may have support from domestic or foreign sources. If the Syrian forces want to enter this region, they must first pave the way for this entrance with contacts, which they have already made for the sake of surmounting the difficulties with the forces present and with the regional forces that support these local forces, if these latter have regional connections.

[Question] But what about the second part of the question concerning the issue of the Palestinian camps?

[Answer] If the matter were left to me, I would never wage war with the Palestinians, nor would I allow such a battle. The important thing is that we

agree on certain principles with the Palestinians, including that they cannot have weapons outside the camps and that they must obey the legitimate Lebanese authority, just as all the forces located in its territory do, because it is the sovereign authority. When we forbid Lebanese from carrying weapons, naturally, weapons must be taken from the Palestinians outside the camps. They must also refrain from any military actions on Lebanese territory. I am not against the Palestinians, I am for their retention of their weapons inside the camps only for the purposes of self-defense, in case an Israeli aggression either by air or with commandos occurs again as it did before, when the Lebanese state was unable to save them from this aggression. In these circumstances only do the Palestinians have the right to be able to defend themselves. The Palestinians are our brothers in heritage, history, religion and goals. We can only treat them as a brother would treat a brother. We must help them and cooperate with them so that they can live in peace and harmony until the difficult conditions that they are experiencing come to an end and until the great issue for which they left their homes and land and for which they live this difficult life today is resolved.

The solution to this problem is left to the politicians who concern themselves with this reality, on the condition that they think in terms of these concepts, that they work to elevate the cause that they believe in and that they never allow it to be violated. That this solution should take place by means of war or liquidations is unacceptable to me.

[Question] How do you perceive security in greater Beirut, which is often discussed. How could forces be deployed within it?

[Answer] The security plan of West Beirut is now proceeding reasonably. The legitimate Lebanese forces are the ones that have contact with the people, while the Syrian forces support them when necessary. I believe that authority must be returned to the legitimate forces throughout the capital and that they must be deployed at all the public facilities, areas and streets. They must be the ones to inspire fear in and influence the people. If, God forbid, they are unable to do this, the Syrian forces can offer them support in their tasks, so that this may be achieved. This must be done in accordance with an understanding between the legitimate forces and the Syrians and with coordination between the two so that each faction can implement a plan of action in preparation for achieving the security goals as soon as possible and returning things to normal. I believe that this suggestion is the correct method that would achieve the favorable development of security in the city of greater Beirut, along with defining the boundaries of the activity of each faction in the framework of the security plan of the capital as a whole.

[Question] Is Your Eminence optimistic that this will happen soon?

[Answer] I hope that it will happen and I cannot abandon my optimism because the plan of the Syrian army's entry into West Beirut and the extension of security in it is a very good plan. We can build great hope upon it.

[Question] In your opinion, is it possible for the current Beirut security plan to extend to Sidon and its suburbs to control what is happening there, or does the situation in Sidon differ from that of West Beirut?

[Answer] We should begin in Beirut now and put an end to its security problems. This is not an easy matter. If we succeed in this, we can think of moving to other areas, since everything cannot be achieved at once. We should consider the situation and handle it step by step. If the first step succeeds, we can move to the following step, and so forth until we reach in the end what we desire on all the Lebanese territory.

[Question] Do you expect the Lebanese-Syrian summit to be held as a result of the current negotiations now taking place in Damascus?

[Answer] All the news on this subject that reaches us says that the preparations for the summit have been made and that recent events, despite their horror and the disaster and woe that they have brought, cannot be a reason for abandoning this issue, nor can they prevent the convening of this summit. What I know is that the negotiations concerning a Lebanese-Syrian agreement are still in full progress, in particular during the five-way meeting that took place recently in Damascus. We have been apprised of the results of this meeting, which itself was an important step. The results of this meeting cannot be neglected; they must be considered a step toward a summit, in preparation for putting an end to what is happening in Lebanon. The summit is not impossible or unlikely. Indeed, I think that anything is possible, if intentions are good. As long as there are negotiations, I think that the summit will take place soon, although it is not in my power to specify a particular date for them.

[Question] Some people discuss this summit as if it is the key to salvation. In your opinion, if this summit were held, would it establish the broad lines of political reform or would it be like previous ones?

[Answer] What we understand is that the convening of this summit will only take place after all difficulties have been overcome, all issues have been discussed, all problems have been dealt with, and after everyone has arrived at one point and agreed on a formula. If it is held, the summit will be, God willing, a successful one and will not be like previous ones.

[Question] Will it include an end to the Lebanese war?

[Answer] I believe that it will be the beginning of a new easing of tension and a new era, God willing.

[Question] What can we say to those who link the Lebanese crisis to the crisis of the Middle East?

[Answer] The Lebanese crisis cannot be completely separated from the crisis of the Middle East. However, it can be at least partially separated from it. The Middle East crisis extends not only to Lebanon, but to all the countries of the region. However, at the same time, we see that the countries of the region live in peace domestically. We look forward to normal daily life returning to us, as it exists in other countries of the region. This does not mean that if we reached a solution to our internal crisis, we would no longer be concerned with the Middle East crisis. We are always affected by it,

positively and negatively. However, despite this link, we must work to isolate the internal crisis in Lebanon, especially the security crisis, from it. On the other hand, we cannot postpone inter-Lebanese agreement, the rebuilding of what has been destroyed, and the revival of the Lebanese economy until after the Middle East crisis has been solved.

[Question] The Lebanese are experiencing a crisis that is perhaps more serious than the political crisis. This is the crisis of livelihood. How can the people survive it? What do you think are the solutions, even if only partial, to it?

[Answer] We are currently experiencing a crisis that is more than we can take. The people cannot continue with this monetary anarchy in an atmosphere of irresponsibility, in which certain people dominate as a result of the absence of order and the absence of a fear of authority. A new step must be taken in this area to help the people begin a new period that would enable them to find the power and determination to face the economic challenge that confronts them. This can only happen under the auspices of a regime of legitimacy and authority. I imagine that the security plan today will pave the way for such a result. We deeply hope that we succeed in this and that we help achieve it at the earliest opportunity, God willing.

13292

CSO: 4404/275

PRO-IRAQI JOURNAL DISPARAGES SYRIAN PEACEMAKING EFFORTS

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 2 Mar 87 p 19

[Article: "Is There Any AMAL [Hope] for a Lebanese Peace?"]

[Text] In the course of the insane fighting, with the pace of the millstone of violence which is wearing Lebanon down, destroying the lives of the Lebanese, crushing their cities and eliminating their livelihood, people are wondering how and when peace will return to Lebanon.

In some Lebanese, Arab and international circles, there are people who believe that the Syrian regime is better qualified than any other to carry out this mission. This conviction is founded on many justifications.

The first of these justifications is that regardless of these circles' opinion on the issue of defining Lebanon's national identity and its relationship with neighbors, Lebanon is part of the regional Arab system and Syria is the Arab country closest to Lebanon, most aware of its problems and most sensitive to and influenced by its ailments, and therefore is best suited to help it emerge from its ordeal.

The second of these justifications is that Syria actually has 30,000 troops in Lebanon, not to mention the Syrian intelligence personnel deployed over all areas of Lebanon. This force can be moved rapidly in order to take charge of security and consolidate the peace. Moreover, Syria, if the situation requires, can move greater numbers of forces onto Lebanese territory. The Syrian army now is one of the biggest in the region, and on top of that, in terms of materiel and expertise, it is able to deploy itself in all regions of Lebanon for the sake of completing the desired mission.

The third of these justifications is that Syria has moral significance among most groups in the war of Lebanon. Its significance in AMAL's view does not require much close examination; Nabih Birri, the leader of the movement, has been in Damascus for months, coordinating with the Syrian leaders and consulting with them over things great and small. The Syrians' significance in Walid Junblatt's view may not be as great, but it is about time that the leader of the Progressive Socialists ignored the the Syrian officials while the anniversary of the martyrdom of his father the late leader is still

fresh in people's minds and Syrians hands are still "stretched out" in the al-Shuf and elsewhere. What applies to Walid Jumblatt applies in one form or another to Mustafa Sa'd, the Sidon leader who finds himself compelled from time to time to assert displays of friendship to Damascus and emphasize the importance of its role in Lebanon. Syria has a strong position in Tripoli which is founded on blood, which fire has forged and which was matched by intense gunfire which dominated the northern Lebanese city until that yielded, surrendered and declared its repentance. A group of Tripolitarians a short while ago tried to challenge the influential Syrian position and the Syrians and their "allies" replied with extreme violence which reminded the people of Tripoli that their city was not very far from Hamah. Above and beyond these various points, if the Syrian leadership wants to stretch its hand out to the Lebanese forces or the Palestinians, it will find more than one hand reaching out to shake with it and make a pledge with it to bury the past in the cemetery of the Lebanese ruins and aspire to better relations in the future.

The fourth of these justifications is that Syria has extensive regional and international relations which it can mobilize to serve the peace plan in Lebanon. The most important of these relations, from the purely Lebanese viewpoint, is its relationship with Tehran, since bringing Lebanon out of the fire requires persuading the Iranians to refrain from pouring gasoline and other inflammable materials on the flames which are spreading furiously through the jungle of the war of Lebanon. Damascus is supposed to be able to address Tehran with this thinking, that is, if thinking is of use with Iran.

These justifications and reasons are paving the way for Damascus to assume the task of ending the war of Lebanon. However, in spite of these justifications, although the war has entered its 12th year, and although Syria has given all types of compensation and negotiation to restore tranquility to Lebanese soil -- in spite of that, it has not yet succeeded in realizing this mission. Why is that?

The main problem in Syria's Lebanese policy is that it has the objective of spreading a "Syrian peace" out over Lebanon rather than a Lebanese Arab peace. In other words, it has the objective of tightening the grip of the ruling group in Syria over Lebanon, instead of helping the Lebanese renew their political option. The latest chapter in the war offers tangible proof of the nature of the Syrian role in Lebanon and the fears it provokes among the Lebanese.

This is because it is Damascus which drove AMAL, perhaps in violation of many of its members' wishes, to surround and attack the Palestinian camps in southern Beirut. These battles created extreme tensions in Lebanon, pushed the peace plans away from it and turned Lebanese territories into a theater for resolving the struggle between Damascus and the Palestine resistance -- a struggle the Syrians, the Lebanese, the Palestinians and the Arabs in general would have done without had Damascus been won over to independent Palestinian decisionmaking. However, Damascus is determined to hold the Palestinian card, even if that results in enflaming fires on Lebanese territory. Thus, when AMAL failed to close Lebanon to the Palestine Liberation Organization and purge the camps of its supporters, and when the atmosphere

shifted against it, Walid Junblatt, Mustafa Sa'd, the Lebanese Communist Party, the Syrian National Party and many other political groups moved away from the category of people allied with it to that of people opposed to it who were cooperating secretly or openly with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Only when the military pressure intensified and its personnel were expelled from many sections in West Beirut did Damascus hasten to intervene and move its forces into Beirut in order to separate the belligerents and resume the talk about peace in Lebanon, and words of sympathy with the majority of the Lebanese who were suffering from the insane fighting and the destructive struggles poured out of Damascus.

This chapter of the Syrian intervention in Lebanon proves the impossibility of the task the Syrian leadership is outlining for itself in Lebanon, because it is not possible, in our estimation, to combine the role of a regime which is working to terminate the war with the role of a party which wants to realize regional, historic and expansionist gains for itself at the expense of the Lebanese and Palestinians. As long as the Syrian leadership is determined to realize the second half of this task, it will not be able to take charge of carrying out the first half of it. Thus the Lebanese war will continue, while the Syrians sink deeper and deeper in its voracious shifting sands. That is a role on its part which we are concerned about for the sake of Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, the people and the country, and all the Arabs.

11887

CSO: 4404/304

LEBANON

BRIEFS

PESSIMISM OF PRESIDENT--On the subject of President Amin al-Jumayyil, people visiting the Republican Palace have related that after the eighth round of negotiations between the Lebanese and Syrian working teams he has started to despair of the state matters have come to. The president, according to these visitors, considers that no progress has occurred in the course of this round of negotiations and has stressed to them that he will not relinquish the powers of the president as long as he occupies this position, until his tenure ends. In another area, political sources have said that in the course of the Lebanese-Syrian negotiations, it has been repeatedly said, concerning the official Lebanese party the Lebanese president represents, that it has said that the powers of the president which are the subject of disagreement prompt it to say that Lebanon endorses powers for its president which cannot be less than the powers given to any Arab president or ruler. [Text] [Beirut AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 27 Mar 87 p 10]

CSO: 4404/304

BRITAIN MAKES SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO DEFENSE

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 25-31 Mar 87 pp 32-34

[Article: "Saudi Arabia and Britain Have a Long History of Cooperation on Defense That Was Made Necessary by Common Interests; From Lightning Airplanes in the Sixties to Tornado Fighter Airplanes in the Eighties"]

[Text] Last year, in 1985, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia chose the offer that Britain submitted to supply the Saudi Arabian air force with airplanes and other combat equipment it will need in the future. The two countries signed al-Yamamah Agreement, which is regarded by all observers as "the deal of the age." Describing the deal in those terms is no exaggeration. This agreement, which Britain won after a lengthy, heated competition with French and American firms in the aircraft industry, stipulates that Britain shall provide the Saudi air force with 132 airplanes of different kinds. In addition, Britain will provide Saudi Arabia with air to air missiles, air to surface missiles, and various other ammunition. The total cost of this deal is estimated to be about 5 billion pounds sterling (approximately 8 billion dollars). But it was not the magnitude of this agreement, the number of airplanes involved in it or its huge price tag that constituted the only factors behind the extraordinary attention it received among Arabs as well as regionally and internationally. In fact, the main factor behind all this attention had to do with the kind of airplanes and equipment which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was to acquire by virtue of this agreement. It may be said that these were the most modern, the most advanced and absolutely the most effective weapons in the world at the present time. Moreover, within a few months after the agreement was signed, the Saudi air force actually started receiving the first shipments of aircraft and equipment that had been agreed to. To a large extent this was a surprise to many analysts and military observers who did not expect such extraordinarily prompt delivery, compared to the usual recognized international standards for starting implementation of the articles of an agreement. The airplanes that were part of that agreement were delivered, and they were actually put into operation by Saudi pilots. Flight crews have completed their combat training and the preparations which are required for piloting and mastering those airplanes.

Choosing the Best and the Most Appropriate

The al-Yamamah Agreement was actually a significant accomplishment for the two signatories. It was a significant political, military, economic and strategic

achievement that established the Saudis' ability and their willingness to choose from the advanced weapons which are available on the international market those which can do the best and most appropriate job in meeting their needs and requirements. In making their choice the Saudis considered only those matters which had to do basically with the requirements of building their defense capabilities and achieving the goals of developing their military capabilities in accordance with the kingdom's strategic priorities. The Saudi air force thus embarked upon a process of evaluating, testing and comparing the various kinds of airplanes which were offered to them through a program to modernize and develop their combat and support units over the next 20 years. Among these airplanes was the French fighter, the Mirage 2000; the American fighter, the F-15 Eagle, which has been used by the Saudi Air force for several years on intercept, pursuit and air defense missions; the American fighter, the F-16 Falcon; and the American fighter, the F-15 E Strike Eagle, which is an offensive F-15 fighter. In addition, the Saudis were offered the French and West German training and tactical support airplane, the Alpha Jet; and the Brazilian trainer aircraft, the Tucano.

Finally, the Saudi air force chose to acquire 72 defensive and offensive Tornado fighters: 48 offensive Tornado IDS fighters and 24 Tornado ADV intercepting fighters were ordered. The Saudi air force also chose to acquire 30 training and tactical support Hawk airplanes and 30 Pilatus BC-9 training airplanes.

There was no doubt that the Saudi choice was proper. The Tornado IDS offensive fighter would provide the Saudi air force with a strategic capability that is at the present time unmatched by any Middle Eastern air force. In fact, this airplane would give the Saudi air force a capability that many of the world's principal air forces lack. This is due to the qualities of this advanced fighter, which is now being produced in accordance with a joint cooperative program between Britain, West Germany and Italy. This fighter can carry 8 tons of offensive ammunition; it has a range of 1,800 kilometers; and it can fly at a high rate of speed at low altitudes to escape detection by the enemy's radar and by his means for detecting and intercepting airplanes. In addition, the airplane can fly under a variety of weather and visibility conditions due to its advanced electronic equipment. At the present time this fighter's specifications and capabilities can only be compared to those of the American F-111 fighter, which is used exclusively by the U.S. air force and the Australian air force. It can also be compared to the Soviet Sokhoi-24, which is used exclusively by the Soviet air force.

The Tornado ADV interceptor fighter is a special model aircraft for intercept, pursuit and air defense missions. At the present time it is being used exclusively by the British air force which started receiving this aircraft only in 1985. Because this airplane has a long flying range and because it is heavily armed and equipped with radar devices, it is ideal for strategic air defense missions.

With regard to the Hawk training airplanes, it is enough to mention that this British airplane, which is considered the best trainer and tactical support jet airplane currently operating in the world, won a competition that was conducted a few years ago by the U.S. navy to choose the best new trainer aircraft. This

airplane won the competition against several American and other world models whose manufacturers had hoped to win that contract then. But the U.S. navy decided to purchase 345 of these Hawk airplanes to use them in training and preparing navy pilots during the remaining years of this century.

But the al-Yamamah Agreement was not restricted to airplanes. It also included weapons and special equipment which are now being produced for the British air force. These weapons and equipment include Sky Flash air to air missiles whose range is up to 50 kilometers; Alarm air to surface missiles which attack air defense batteries and their contiguous radar systems; and GB-223 cluster bombs designated for attacks against air bases.

Distinguished British Interest

To Britain, winning the al-Yamamah Agreement was a major gain. It had won nothing like it for a long period of time in the Middle East or even in the Third World as a whole. In addition to being the largest such agreement in history between the British military industry and a country that was not a member of NATO, it also proved the ability of these industries to produce advanced and effective equipment capable of competing with the most advanced products in the world and winning. Furthermore, the agreement restored Britain once again to the forefront of countries exporting weapons to the Arab region after a long period of absence from that activity. The importance of that development cannot be ignored. This happened at a time when it seemed that Britain had lost its competitive edge in that area to the United States, the Soviet Union and France, not to mention other "relatively" secondary countries like Italy and Brazil.

That is why it was not unusual for government, media and industrial circles in Britain to point out the importance of the al-Yamamah Agreement promptly. They focused on it as "a turning point" in Britain's position on the Middle East map. From the British point of view, of course, that meant that this agreement may be the golden opportunity which Britain ought to benefit from to regain its previous vital role as an influential and active international power in the Middle East. This is the role which Britain had been gradually losing since the late sixties and early seventies.

A Long History of Cooperation

What may be especially noteworthy in that regard is that the al-Yamamah Agreement was not a unique precedent-setting agreement in the history of Saudi-British relations, as far as cooperation on defense, and particularly air defense is concerned. Actually, this agreement resumed in a practical way the long history of cooperative relations on defense between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Britain. It is a history whose roots can be traced to the fifties when the Saudi army received its first armored equipment from Britain. That was when the Saudi army received its first limited quantities of Staghound and Greyhound tanks. In the sixties this was followed by other quantities of British weapons which included Ferret tanks, field artillery, mortar, and anti-tank Vigilante rockets.

The most salient and most vital step in that regard, however, was that which was taken in the mid sixties. In 1965, under conditions that did not differ much from those which paved the way for the al-Yamamah Agreement, which was concluded 20 years later, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia chose Britain to implement a comprehensive program whose aim was to develop and modernize the kingdom's air force and air defense system. The choice was made after a competition that was held at that time in which the French fighter, the Mirage-3, and the American fighter, the F-104 Starfighter, had participated.

As a result, the Saudi air force then started receiving the Hawker Hunter land attack fighters. In addition, the Saudi air force also received Lightning interceptor fighters. At that time the latter airplane was considered the best fighter interceptor aircraft in the world. The kingdom started receiving these fighters almost at the same time that they were being delivered to the British Royal Air Force. The Lightning fighters continued to be a principal factor in Saudi Arabia's combat air force throughout the sixties and seventies, just as they constituted the foundation of Britain's air interception force during that period. The process of replacing the Lightning fighters in Saudi Arabia's air force did not begin till the early eighties when Saudi Arabia started receiving the advanced American F-15 Eagle fighters. This process is being completed at the present time, and the new Tornado fighters are replacing some of the Lightning fighters that are still in service. At the same time the British air force is also replacing the Lightning. Once again, the only replacement for this fighter is none other than the ADV Tornado.

The Hawker Hunter fighters were taken out of service in Saudi Arabia in the seventies and replaced by the more modern American F-5 Tiger fighters. But these Hawker Hunter fighters and the Lightning fighters were not the only military equipment which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had received from Britain during that early period. This equipment also included Thunderbird anti-aircraft surface to air missiles. These were the first anti-aircraft missiles of their kind to be deployed by the Saudi armed forces. In addition, the Kingdom acquired at that time British Firestreak and Red Top air to air missiles for the Lightning fighters. Since the late sixties, the Saudi air force has been receiving the training and tactical support Strike Master jet airplanes, which were produced in Britain specifically at Saudi Arabia's request. Ever since then these airplanes have been used to train and qualify Saudi combat fighters. They will continue to be used for that purpose until they are replaced by Hawk airplanes, which are included in the recent al-Yamamah Agreement.

The early eighties provided an opportunity for Britain to regain its position as a principal weapons supplier to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. At that time the kingdom was involved in a conflict in the United States with Zionist circles that support Israel. These are the circles that were trying to prevent former President Jimmy Carter's administration from agreeing to provide the Saudi air force with the strategic Airborne Warning and Control System, the AWACS airplanes, which the Kingdom wanted to acquire to bolster its air defense. To the Saudis the choices that were available to them then were to cancel the request to purchase the American AWACS airplanes and to turn instead to the competition, the British Nimrod airplane. However, the Saudis decided to concentrate on trying to acquire the AWACS because it was a better airplane and

more capable of carrying out the operational requirements which were designated for it in the context of its mission.

The Saudis realized their wishes when Washington approved the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia in 1981. The kingdom thus became the second country in the world after the United States to acquire such important airplanes. The Saudi air force started putting these airplanes into operation in 1984 after Saudi crews completed their training on them and were able to operate them. But the British airplane, the Nimrod, continued to undergo developments and to be the subject of debate for many years. Then the Royal British Air Force decided to scrap that airplane once and for all and acquire the American AWACS after these airplanes proved to be more efficient and more effective. At any rate, the British air force will not start receiving the AWACS before 1989, that is, 5 full years after the Saudi air force started operating them. The French air force too is following in the footsteps of the British air force: a few days ago France put in its request to purchase AWACS airplanes.

Future Cooperation

Cooperation on defense between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Britain. like any other cooperation arrangement between the kingdom and any country in the world. is first and foremost a cooperation agreement that is based on the principle of responding specifically to Saudi military and strategic priorities. That is why it came as no surprise when the Saudis chose the Tornado, Hawk and Pilatus airplanes a few months ago, just as they had chosen the AWACS years ago and just as they had chosen the Lightning aircraft 2 decades ago. If the Saudi monarch's present visit to Britain provides evidence of the closeness and strength of Saudi-British relations, then the first and foremost gauge for the continued cooperation between the two countries in the area of defense remains what it has always been: achieving the objectives of the process of building up Saudi Arabia's defenses in all areas. It is from that particular premise that the al-Yamamah Agreement and previous as well as subsequent agreements are nothing more than indicators of the fact that this cooperation is likely to continue and to grow in the future.

8592

CSO: 4404/294

SYRIA

AL-BA'TH CITED ON EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

JN100749 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 10 Apr 87

[From the Press Review]

[Text] On falsifying the results of the parliamentary elections in Egypt, the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: A regime which traded with the Egyptians' blood and made peace with the Zionists, the historic enemies of the Egyptian people and the Arab nation, claiming this peace is in the Egyptian people's interest is able to falsify and obliterate all facts and call a repression democracy just as the traitors of peoples do in the world. We do not find it strange that a regime which undermines a people's patriotism, affiliation, and nobility follows the utterances of its masters in the White House, masters who regard the bloody era of Somoza as a democratic era and who regard racial discrimination even inside the United States itself as a democratic act. The fact which will remain is that the renegade regime in Egypt will continue to be encircled by the people until it falls so that Egypt will regain its Arabism and the Egyptian people will restore their vanguard role in leading the pan-Arab action which will inevitably triumph.

/8309

CSO: 4400/196

SYRIA

TISHRIN CITED ON SEDITION IN LEBANON

JN090936 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Apr 87

[From the press review]

[Text] TISHRIN says: It has become a top priority in national and pan-Arab action to place the struggle relations between Syria and our Lebanese and Palestinian peoples within a sound framework to unify all efforts in confronting the real danger represented by the two-headed enemy, Zionism and imperialism. The welcome the heroes of the Syrian Army, the Arab nation's army, received from the Shatila refugee camp exposed 'Arafat and his clique, their lies, and intrigues. Moreover, it has become clear they were the ones who are sowing death; obstructing security, stability, and the calm; and seeking to maintain sedition in Lebanon to gain the approval of their U.S. master and so that the Tel Aviv leaders may applaud them and allow them to sit down to direct negotiations as fake representatives of the Palestinians.

However, Syria is lying in wait for all conspirators and conspiracies. This new conspiratorial scheme will not succeed. The conspirators will discover; they will reap what they have sown.

/8309

CSO: 4400/196

SYRIA

AL-THAWRAH VIEWS EGYPT'S ECONOMIC, POLITICAL PROBLEMS

JN030647 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 3 Apr 87

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Egyptian Regime and the Game of Deception," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: The Egyptian regime is doing its utmost to hide its economic difficulties and political problems. Every now and then this regime plays exposed political games to conceal the crises from which it suffers on all levels. These crises were created by the Camp David course and the open-door policy which has opened Egypt's doors to monopolies, particularly U.S. companies which have controlled Egypt's economic potential by dominating the economic market's activities, and the policy of loans and aid which has placed the Egyptian regime in a position of absolute subservience. This tragic subservience is aggravated by the Egyptian regime's absolute military subservience to the United States.

AL-THAWRAH says: Events and developments have proved that the Arab people in Egypt rejected the Camp David accords and viewed them as a danger to Egypt's security and to its present and future within its Arab atmosphere. The proud Egyptian people have expressed this rejection in various ways which showed the Egyptian people's nobility and their deep link to Arabism. Moreover, the ground has been shaken more than once under the feet of the Camp David regime officials. This regime is now trying to contain the masses' anger as well as the escalating popular and official opposition to the Camp David policy. However, all attempts by the Egyptian regime to beautify Camp David's ugly face and its serious economic, political, and military repercussions on Egypt's security have ended in failure. Furthermore, this regime has not succeeded in marketing its policy to the people.

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CSO: 4400/196

REPORTAGE ON VISIT OF ROMANIAN PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU

Reception on Arrival

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 13 Mar 87 pp 1, 10

[Text]

Red carpet was rolled-out to welcome Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu when he arrived in Dhaka on Thursday morning on a three-day state visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Begum Raushan Ershad received President Ceausescu and Madam Elena Ceausescu at the gangway of Boeing 707 of Rumanian presidential flight.

A 21 gun salute boomed to herald the arrival of the honoured guests from Socialist Republic of Rumania. Two children presented President Ceausescu and Madam Elena with bouquets.

Then President Ceausescu and Madam Elena were conducted to the saluting dais from where the Rumanian President took salute from a smartly turned out contingent drawn from the three services. The national anthems of the two countries were played by services band.

The Rumanian President also inspected the guard.

The visiting President was then taken to the presentation line and was introduced to Vice-President A.K.M. Nurul Islam, Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, members of the cabinet, chiefs of three services and heads of foreign missions in Bangladesh.

The whole airport area wore a

festive look with festoons buntings and national flags of the two countries.

Large size photographs of President Ershad and President Ceausescu were hung on the terminal building.

School girls in colourful dresses waved streamers and danced and showered flower petals on the visiting guests.

Earlier, four jet fighters of Bangladesh airforce escorted the special aircraft carrying the Rumanian President as it entered Bangladesh air space to Zia International Airport.

The airport ceremony over, President Ceausescu accompanied by host President Ershad drove in a ceremonial motorcade to the state guest house, Shugandha, where he will be staying during his visit in Dhaka.

People stood at vantage points along the route from the airport to the state guest house, Shugandha and greeted the Rumanian President by waving hands. Several road points along the route were decorated with miniature flags of both the country.

President Ceausescu during his visit in Dhaka is accompanied by Vice Prime Minister Dimitrie Ancuta, Foreign Minister Ioan Totu, presidential adviser Constantin Mitea and Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and International Economic Cooperation Iulian Bituleanu.

12 March Banquet

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 13 Mar 87 pp 1, 10

[Text]

Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu on Thursday night called for concerted global efforts for cessation of tension and promotion of peace and harmony, reports BSS.

Speaking at a banquet hosted by President and Begum Ershad in honour of the Romanian President and Madame Elena Ceausescu at the Bangabhaban, he referred to the existing tension and distrust in the international life increasing the danger of a world war.

"All these increase the danger of a world war which would unavoidably be turned into a nuclear disaster leading to the very annihilation of the conditions for life on our planet", the Romanian President said.

President Ceausescu pointed out these "realities" and said that one would be justified to state that the basic issue of the present time was the defence of peace, the cessation of arms race and passage to concrete measures for disarmament, for nuclear disarmament first and foremost.

He said that now it was imperative more than ever before that all countries and people unite their forces and cooperate as closely as possible to halt the current dangerous course of events. It was the time that all of us work in collaboration for peace and ensure the policy of disarmament, President Ceausescu said.

The Romanian President said that his country has consistently stood for the renunciation of the use and threat of force in international ties, for the settlement of all "hotbeds" of conflicts in different parts of the world exclusively through peaceful means. In this context, he suggested an international conference on the Middle East be organised under the aegis of the United Nations to be attended all concerned states including the PLO and the Israel.

President Ceausescu also referred to the Iran-Iraq war and called for cessation of all military actions as soon as possible and peaceful settlement of the issues between two warring countries.

He described the international situation as "continues to be particularly serious and complex" be-

cause of arms race and other growing conflicts. He said that the gap between the rich and poor countries was getting wider an outcome of the world economic crisis.

Referring to the difficult economic situation of the developing countries and serious problems facing the contemporary world, President Ceausescu said his country was working actively for the eradication of underdevelopment and establishment of a new world economic order.

Stressing balanced growth of world economic development, he maintained the need for an unsponsored international conference in which both the developed and developing countries on equal footing to work out agreements conducive to a global situation of underdevelopment problems.

Turning to his visit to Bangladesh, the Romanian President said that the visit was an expression of good relations of friendship and collaboration that had been established between two countries and their peoples, from common desire to further develop them in different fields of activities.

Calling for further broadening and deepening the bilateral relations, he said his visit to Bangladesh would be a landmark in the strengthening of cooperation between two countries and their peoples.

President's speech

Earlier President Hussain Muhammad Ershad expressed the hope that the friendship and cooperation between Bangladesh and Romania would grow in depth and dimension in the years to come.

Speaking at the banquet the President said Bangladesh and Romania have excellent friendly relations.

He said exchange of high level visits and conclusion of agreements on cooperation in the economic, commercial, technical and cultural fields have facilitated in forging cordial bilateral relations. Simultaneously, he said "our two countries have established close cooperation in international field for cause of peace and progress."

President Ershad commended the significant progress achieved by

Romanian people under the "wise and dynamic" leadership of President Nicolae Ceausescu and said indeed Romania has not only a glorious past but also a dynamic present and a most promising future.

Referring to the massive nation building task undertaken by the people to Bangladesh, the President said all these are aimed at attaining the goal of economic self-reliance within the shortest possible time. In this context he mentioned about his country's industrial policy which provides excellent opportunities for foreign investment and joint venture projects. This, he pointed out, had drawn commendable attention of industrialists from home and abroad.

He said on political plane, Bangladesh had succeeded in holding the presidential election in October last marking the final step in the process of transition to democracy in the country.

President Ershad referred to the Bangladesh's strict adherence to an independent foreign policy based on its abiding commitment to UN Charter and the principals and objectives of the Non-aligned Movement and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

He expressed his country's deep concern at the deteriorating global situation which has been posing threat to peace and security.

He mentioned about the explosive situation in Middle East. Israel's complete withdrawal from Arab territories, and realisation of the Palestinian people's legitimate and inalienable rights including their right to have an independent and sovereign state under the leadership of PLO which, he said, are still far at sight.

The President said despite repeated call by the world community, the presence of foreign troops in some sovereign countries continued. The illegal occupation of Namibia in defiance of the UN resolution by the racist reactionary regime of Pretoria and its racist rule in South Africa has been continuing, he pointed out.

He said "as in the past we are committed to work along with other peace-loving countries of the world

in their efforts to resolve all the unsolved issues and other international issues.

President Ershad said we have observed most painfully that the continued arms race has resulted in serious impediments to security and escalation of international tension. The unrestricted use of scarce resources for military purposes on the one has created a sense of fear and uncertainty among nations and on the other added universal social opportunity cost. "We believe that re-direction of resources from armaments to development will be in the interest of the developed and developing countries alike".

Economic disparity

He expressed concern at the alarming global economic scene and said no durable peace can be achieved as long as economic disparity among nations continue to widen. He said in view of the interdependence of the economies

of the North and the South, it has become imperative to adopt an integrated and coherent approach for the resolution of the global economic issues. A just and equitable international economic order is an imperative for improving the quality of life of the people everywhere in the world, he pointed out.

Referring to the formal launching of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Dhaka in 1985 at the initiative of Bangladesh, the President said a new horizon had emerged in this area in regional cooperation for improving the quality of life of one billion people.

He said the second SAARC summit held in Bangalore in November last and the establishment of the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu two months ago have enabled us to consolidate further the gains made so far. "With dedication and sense of purpose, we all are formally committed to the realisation of the set principals of the SAARC".

13 March Talks

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu and President H.M. Ershad expressed their determination to continue efforts with other peace-loving nations for total and complete disarmament.

In their formal talks held on Friday at Bangabhaban the two heads of state termed the escalating arms race as the most crucial problem of today's world. They stressed the need for diffusion of tension in different parts of the world and demanded implementation of the new international economic order.

The two leaders who had similarity of views on major issues now affecting the world felt that there would be no lasting peace in the Middle East without complete withdrawal of the Israelis from all occupied Arab lands and establishment of a sovereign and independent state for Palestinians in their own land. They expressed their concern over the Iran-Iraq war and appealed to both the countries for immediate cessation of their hostilities. They firmly condemned the South Afri-

can policy of apartheid and expressed solidarity with the Namibian people in their struggle for liberation under the leadership of SWAPO.

Briefing newsmen on the three-hour talks between President Ceausescu and President Ershad, Foreign Secretary Fakhruddin Ahmed said that the two leaders noted with satisfaction the similarity of views on major global and regional issues between the two countries.

In reply to a question, the Foreign secretary informed that both the leaders had "identical views" on Afghanistan and Kampuchean issues. Both sides demanded withdrawal of Foreign troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea and allow the people there to have their own choice of their government.

On bilateral relations, the two heads of state agreed that sufficient scope existed for further expansion of cooperation in the economic, cultural and trade circles between the two countries. They stressed the need for further augmentation and

diversification of trade and they also emphasised on regular exchange of visits both at leadership and official levels between the two countries.

President Ceausescu appreciated the positive development in Bangladesh under the leadership of President Ershad. He lauded the role of Bangladesh and President Ershad in forming the SAARC and expressed his pleasure over the satisfactory progress by SAARC.

During the talks held in an atmosphere of cordiality and complete understanding, the Romanian President was assisted by his wife, Dr. Elena Ceausescu, Mr. Valentine Ceausescu, Vice-Prime Minister Dimitrie Ancuta, Foreign Minister Ioan Totu, Adviser to President on Press and Information Constantin Mitea, Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade Iulian Bituleanu and other senior officials of his entourage.

President Ershad was assisted in the talks by Deputy Prime Minister incharge of Industries Moudud Ahmed, Deputy Prime Minister in-

charge of Ports and Shipping Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Foreign Minister Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, Finance Minister Syeduzzaman, Information Minister Anwar Zahid, Foreign Secretary, Commerce Secretary, ERD Secretary and other

senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Foreign Secretary termed the three-day state visit of President Nicolae Ceausescu, first by the Romanian head of state to Bangladesh, as a testimony of closer Dhaka-Bucharest relations.

Dhaka Reception

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Mar 87 pp 1, 12

[Text]

The visiting Romanian President, Nicolae Ceausescu and Madam Elena Ceausescu were accorded a civic reception at the lush green North Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad in Dhaka on Friday afternoon, reports BSS.

The reception was organised by Dhaka Municipal Corporation.

Welcoming the distinguished guests, Administrator of the Corporation Col. (Retd) Alhaj Abdul Maleque expressed the hope that the existing cordial and friendly relations between the two countries would be further strengthened by the current visit of President Ceausescu.

Col. Maleque said, the valuable cooperation extended by Romania will play an important role in building an exploitation-free socio-economic system for our teeming millions. He said, increasing contacts of the people of two countries in the field of trade, culture and

education will bring them (people) closer.

Col. Maleque said, like the people of Romania who have made great success in socio-economic development under the leadership of President Ceausescu, the people of Bangladesh under the dynamic leadership of President Ershad have been able to achieve spectacular socio-economic development as a result of his (Ershad) positive and pragmatic programmes.

Replying President Ceausescu said, Romania attaches great importance to its relation with Bangladesh and said "we are committed to implement broad-based economic cooperation with Bangladesh". He assured all possible assistance to Bangladesh to build a prosperous country for the welfare of its people and progress of the nation.

President Ceausescu turning to the global politico-economic issues

with particular emphasis on the problems of the developing nations, stressed on greater cohesion and cooperation among the developing countries. He called for concerted move to overcome economic difficulties now being faced by members of the Non-aligned Movement who constitute nearly two-thirds of world population. Under no circumstances, the rich cannot be allowed to grow richer and compelling the poor becoming poorer.

President Ceausescu was presented a golden key of Dhaka city and a suit piece (Rajshahi silk) by Col. Maleque. Begum Fousia Maleque presented Madam Elena Ceausescu an embroidered Zamdani saree.

The reception was attended by Ministers, politicians, members of Parliament, diplomats, high civil and military officials and elite.

Accords Signed

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

Bangladesh and Romania on Friday signed in Dhaka four separate agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation, shipping, avoidance of double taxation and investment protection, reports BSS.

The long-term agreement on economic, scientific and technical cooperation and avoidance of double taxation agreement were signed by Finance Minister M. Syeduzzaman and Romanian Deputy Prime Minister

Dimitrie Ancuta on behalf of their respective countries.

The investment protection agreement was signed by Deputy Prime Minister Moudud Ahmed and Romanian Deputy Prime Minister on behalf of their respective sides while the shipping agreement was signed by Deputy Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Romanian Deputy Prime Minister.

The agreements were signed immediately

after the conclusion of over two and a half-hour long formal official talks at Bangabhaban between Bangladesh and Romanian sides led by President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu.

Another report says :-The visiting Vice Prime Minister of Romania Dimitrie Ancuta called on the Commerce Minister M.A. Munim in Dhaka on Friday morning.

They discussed matters of mutual interest particularly in the field of trade development between the two countries, an official handout said.

The Commerce Minister apprised the Romanian leader about the urgent necessity of signing 8th barter protocol and suggested to include more items in the new protocol. He called for diversifying the imports from Bangladesh by Romania by including non-traditional items.

The Romanian Vice Prime Minister showed keen interest in the imports of hides and skin from Bangladesh and indicated the possibility of cooperation in fish processing and textile sectors through joint venture projects.

The Romanian Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and International Economic Cooperation Julian Bituleavici was present on the occasion.

Ceausescu Conference Suggestion

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 14 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

President Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania on Friday, suggested to Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury that the latter could call a special conference under the aegis of the United Nations to discuss the problems of underdevelopment, reports BSS.

The visiting President suggested this to Mr. Chowdhury, who is the President of UN General Assembly, when the Foreign Minister called on him at the state guest house "Shugandha" in Dhaka. Mr. Ceausescu said that such a conference could be

called by Mr. Chowdhury in his capacity as the President of the 41st session of UNGA in line with the international conference on law of the seas. Such a conference could be participated by all member states of the United Nations.

During the call on, the Information Minister, Mr. Anwar Zahid and the Romanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Ioan Totu, were present.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to Romania, Mr. Anwar Hashim, was also present.

President Ceausescu congratulated

Mr. Chowdhury for successfully conducting the 41st session of the UN General Assembly and the stand he had taken on different international issues.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister appreciated the contribution by Romania to disarmament particularly the decision of Romania to reduce its army and military expenditures by five per cent.

The Romanian President described his visit to Bangladesh as a reflection of deep and close bilateral ties with Bangladesh.

Text of Communique

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 15, 16 Mar 87

[15 Mar 87, pp 1, 8]

[Text]

Bangladesh and Romania have expressed their 'deep concern' at the escalation of arms race and called it as one of the most 'crucial problems of the world today', reports BSS.

The two countries have reaffirmed their determination to continue making unremitting efforts in cooperation with other peace-loving countries for the realisation of the total disarmament—both nuclear and conventional. The two countries expressed their view in a joint communique, issued Saturday at the end of Romanian President

Nicolae Ceausescu's three-day state visit to Bangladesh.

This was the first visit of the president of Romania to this country. The visit of President Ceausescu, who was accompanied by Madame Elena Ceausescu has taken place at the invitation of President H M. Ershad and Begum Ershad. The two leaders held wide-ranging talks on bilateral and international issues.

The two leaders expressed their determination to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in different fields. Two sides signed four agreements at the

end of the talks between the two leaders.

Following is the text of the joint communique.

At the invitation of His Excellency Mr Hussain Muhammad Ershad, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and Begum Raushan Ershad, His Excellency Mr Nicolae Ceausescu, President of the Socialist Republic of Romania and Madame Elena Ceausescu, paid a state visit to the People's Republic of Bangladesh from March 12-14, 1987. It was the first visit by a Head of State of

the Socialist Republic of Romania to the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

President Ershad positively evaluated the sustained efforts made and commendable results achieved by the Romanian Government under the leadership of President Nicolae Ceausescu for economic and socio-development of the country. He wished Romanian people every success in its onward march towards rapid development of industries, agriculture, science, technology and other fields of human endeavours. The Bangladesh president also expressed appreciation for the pragmatic and constructive foreign policy particularly its contribution to the cause of peace, disarmament and international cooperation.

mament and international cooperation.

President Nicolae Ceausescu positively evaluated the unremitting efforts made and positive results achieved by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh under the leadership of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad for consolidating national independence and sovereignty as well as for attaining social and economic development, the restoration of the democratic process in the country. The Romanian President appreciated the constructive and balanced foreign policy pursued by the Government of Bangladesh. He commended the valuable contribution of Bangladesh to the promotion

of understanding and good neighbourliness in South Asia as well as its active and constructive role in the United Nations, the NAM and other international organisations.

The two Presidents agreed that sufficient scope existed for expanding cooperation in the economic, trade, cultural and technical fields between the two countries. They stressed the need for further augmenting and diversifying trade and economic co-operation between the two countries for the mutual benefit of their people.

The talks highlighted the significant contribution to the strengthening of bilateral relations through the visit of the highest political level. They

[16 Mar 87 p 5]

[Text]

The following is the remaining part of the Bangladesh-Romania Joint Communiqué issued on Saturday at the end of Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu's three-day state visit to Bangladesh.

The President of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh underlined the need to ensure the further growth of trade on a balanced basis as well as sustained development of the two countries' cooperation in various sectors. President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and President Nicolae Ceausescu expressed their confidence and recognized that there was vast scope for further expansion of bilateral economic relations and agreed on concrete steps conducive to the attainment of that goal in accordance with the economic potentials and need of the two countries.

The two Presidents underscored the importance of cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture and sports as being conducive to the promotion of friendship and understanding between the two peoples. They called for closer cooperation in these fields within the framework of the Bangladesh-Romania Agreement for cultural and scientific cooperation.

The two leaders recalled the friendly ties established between

their countries' Parliaments and agreed on the continuance and expansion of contacts and exchanges between the "Jatiyo Sangshad" of Bangladesh and the Grand National Assembly of Romania.

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and President Nicolae Ceausescu had extensive exchange of views on the existing international situation. They noted with satisfaction the close similarity in their views on major global, political and economic issues. They underscored their two countries' strict adherence to the principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference and non-intervention and non-use of force and peaceful settlement of disputes among states.

The two heads of state expressed their deep concern over the escalation of arms race and considered it as one of the most crucial problems of the world today. They reaffirmed their two countries' determination to continue making unremitting efforts in cooperation with other peace-loving countries, for the realisation of total and complete disarmament, both nuclear and conventional.

They also agreed to work together for, in collaboration with other countries, stopping the continuation and widening of military conflicts, the use of force and threat of force, the interference in domestic affairs, the deepening of the world

economic crisis and the worsening of the situation of developing countries. It was also emphasised that no effort should be spared to halt that dangerous course of events towards continuation of armed conflicts and to resume the policy of peace, detente and cooperation for the benefit of the States all over the world. It was underscored that the huge amount of money being spent on production of arms should be diverted for the economic development of developing countries and more to the least developed countries.

President Nicolae Ceausescu apprised President Hussain Muhammad Ershad of Romania's decision to reduce its armament and military expenses by five per cent. The Bangladesh President expressed appreciation for Romania's decision to reduce its armaments and military expenses by five per cent and her contribution towards elimination of arms race and advancing the cause of disarmament.

16. The two Presidents expressed themselves against the continuation of all nuclear tests and requested that appropriate action be taken to ban all such tests as they only increase tension and mistrust in present international affairs.

Bangladesh and Romania are strongly against all activities aimed at militarising outer space and endorse the idea that outer space should be used by all nations for peaceful purposes alone.

President Nicolae Ceausescu and President Hussain Muhammad Ershad examined the situation in Europe and underlined that appropriate efforts should be made by concerned states for the conclusion of a mutually acceptable agreement on the elimination of medium range nuclear missiles from Europe which could be a first step towards freeing the Continent from all nuclear weapons.

President Nicolae Ceausescu and President Hussain Muhammad Ershad are in favour of the creation of zones of peace, collaboration and good-neighbourliness free from nuclear and chemical weapons in different parts of the world, by negotiations among the concerned countries. The two Presidents stressed the efforts being made to transform the Indian Ocean into a Zone of Peace in line with the relevant UN resolutions. The two Presidents called for the implementation of the UN resolution and the convening of an international conference on Indian ocean at an early date.

The two Presidents underlined the great danger posed by the conflicts and tension existing in various parts of the world. They stated in most resolute terms that all armed conflicts should be put to an end and that all the issues between states should be resolved solely by peaceful means through negotiations between states concerned.

The two Presidents expressed their firm conviction that there can be no just and lasting peace in the Middle East without Israel's complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories since 1967 and restoration of the inalienable rights to self-determination of the Palestinian people including the right to establish an independent sovereign state under the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and ensuring the security and independence of all peoples in the region.

Both Heads of state expressed concern over the continuing war between Iran and Iraq which has endangered peace and security in the region. They reviewed their appeal to Iran and Iraq for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for making all possible efforts to achieve a peaceful, just and honourable solution of the dispute.

The two leaders underscored their resolute opposition to imperialism, colonialism, racism and domination in any form or manifestation. While firmly

condemning the South-African regime's policy of apartheid and its aggression against the neighbouring countries, they reiterated their Government's full support for and solidarity with the Namibia's peoples struggle for freedom and independence under the leadership of the SWAPO, their legitimate representative.

The two Presidents expressed themselves in favour of a political solution of the situation in Kampuchea, in the interest of the Kampuchean people, of all the countries and peoples of the area, of the cause of peace and understanding in the region and all over the world. To this context they underlined the necessity of achieving a national reconciliation among all forces in Kampuchea, the withdrawal of the foreign troops from this country and the creation of conditions so that the Kampuchean people can determine their own destiny without any outside interference, and ensuring full respect to independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the neutral and non-aligned status of Kampuchea.

While reviewing the current international economic situation the President of Romania and the President of Bangladesh stressed that the liquidation of underdevelopment, the narrowing of gaps between rich and poor countries and the establishment of a new world economic order are imperative prerequisites of the peoples' peace and security, of the very future of mankind. They called for an early resumption of the global negotiations between the developing and the developed countries with a view to reaching positive results for the benefit of all nations. They also called for an early implementation of the "Substantial New programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries" as well as the "Special measures for the Most Seriously Affected Developing countries."

In view of the fact that each and every state and nation, big or small, is now-a-days responsible for maintaining peace and human civilisation, Bangladesh and Romania are resolutely in favour of the participation, based on equal rights of all States in the settlement of the major questions facing the contemporary world and of a more active contribution to be made by developing and non-aligned countries to the cause of detente, cooperation and peace.

The two Heads of State believe that it is necessary to act for the enhancement of the UN role in international affairs and for the increased contribution of the organisation to ensuring of peace and security, the peaceful settlement of disputes between states and the expansion of economic and social cooperation between the member states. Bangladesh and Romania stand together for enhanced activities by UN for its adjustment to the realities and requirements of today's world for peace, progress and unhindered development of all nations.

The two Heads of state commended the active and positive role being played by the Non-Aligned Movement in the struggle for independence and peace, for the establishment of a new international economic order, for the adherence to the principles of international law in inter-state relations and for the promotion of friendship and cooperation. They expressed satisfaction at the successful holding of the 8th NAM Summit Conference held in Harare and called for the strengthening of unity and cohesion among the non-aligned countries for the realisation of their objective of building a better and just world.

The two Presidents underscored the important role being played by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in the enhancement of cooperation among member countries with a view to consolidating their economic and political independence ensuring their economic and social progress raising the living standards of their peoples and solving their problems. President Nicolae Ceausescu appreciated

the initiatives of Bangladesh, progress so far made and shared with President Ershad his hopes and aspirations for the Association.

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and President Nicolae Ceausescu expressed deep satisfaction at the close and mutually beneficial cooperation between Bangladesh and Romania in the international fields. They called for further expansion of the two countries, cooperation in the UN and its specialised agencies the group of 77 and other international forums for the realisation of the shared objectives of promoting peace security and cooperation in the world.

The two Presidents expressed their full satisfaction with the talks held the understanding reached and the agreements concluded during the visit. They expressed confidence that the visit would give a fresh impetus to the expansion of friendly relations and the strengthening of cooperation between Bangladesh and Romania.

President Nicolae Ceausescu and Madam Elena Ceausescu expressed to President Hussain Muhammad Ershad, Begum Raushan Ershad and the people of Bangladesh, sincere thanks for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to them the visit.

On behalf of Madam Elena Ceausescu and his own, the President of Socialist Republic of Romania extended a cordial invitation to the President of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh and Begum Raushan Ershad to pay a State visit to Romania. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. The date of the visit will be decided through diplomatic channel.

/9274

CSO: 4600/1553

VISITING NORWEGIAN REPORTER SEES EVIDENCE OF POOR IRAQI MORALE

Iraqi POWs Cite Morale

Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian 17 Mar 87

[Article by Per Christiansen: "The Winter Killed Iraqis' Will to Fight"; first paragraph is AFTENPOSTEN introduction]

[Text] "Death to Saddam. Long live Islam." The slogans resounded rhythmically in the large hall. The enthusiasm of the nearly 300 men participating in the shouted chorus was overwhelming--and very surprising. For this was not an Iranian mass meeting supporting the war, but Iraqi soldiers taken prisoner during the latest offensive in the Gulf war who were calling for death and damnation for their own president, Saddam Hussein.

It was a remarkable performance, bordering on the absurd. For years these soldiers have fought against the Iranians--some perhaps since the war broke out six and a half years ago. Now--after being prisoners for a week and a half--they willingly supported Iran's position: "Death to Israel! Death to the USA! Death to Russia!" And "Neither East nor West, but an Islamic Republic."

The prisoners were gathered in an assembly hall at a military camp near the town of Arumiyeh, not more than a couple of miles from where they were taken prisoner--a mountainous and now snow-covered, inhospitable, weather-beaten area, farthest north along the border between the two archenemies. Their numbers agreed more or less with the number of prisoners--289--which Iran claimed to have captured during the latest successful offensive on that section of the front.

For some the turnabout appeared to be genuine. Others were more reserved and stayed in the background. But there was no doubt about the enthusiasm, as the slogans were chanted, fists were clenched and bodies swayed. All in front of foreign TV cameras and the scrutiny of reporters.

In the beginning the prisoners were seated in ten orderly rows. But later they pushed forward together while the intensity of the shouts rose to a crescendo.

Suddenly the prisoners grabbed an Iranian officer, lifted him into the air and carried him on their shoulders. Smiling broadly, he was bounced up and down in time with the shouted slogans. A couple of other Iranians hastily removed the pistol that he was wearing in his belt.

The enthusiasm could partly be explained by the prisoners' desire to please their new masters. But it also appeared that they felt a clear relief at having escaped from the hard and uncertain life at the front--a front where the morale of the Iraqis had declined with the temperature.

"Our forces gave up too easily," said Majid Qaddum Muhammad, a 27-year-old doctor in the Iraqi Army who was sent to the front on the first day of the Iranian offensive, and three days later found himself a prisoner. "The Iraqi Army is a worn out army," he explained, at the same time as he praised the Iranian Army.

Other prisoners said that it has been a hard winter at the front--the hardest in a long time in the Kurdistan mountains. They have not had decent camps--in the worst case only holes in the snow at over 2,000 meters altitude.

The biggest problem Doctor Muhammad was confronting--a problem he shared with his fellow prisoners--was that he could not return to his family in Najaf in southern Iraq as long as the present regime in Baghdad remains in power. What they have done is considered by the Iraqis to be the same as treason.

But compared with the hard life at the front in an endless war, perhaps it is preferable.

Iraqis Seen Less Motivated

Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian 18 Mar 87 p 62

[Article by Per A. Christiansen: "Death on Hill 2519"; first paragraph is AFTENPOSTEN introduction]

[Text] There is apparently nothing worth dying for on Hill 2519. So the dead Iraqi soldier lying on his back in a snowdrift and staring at the sky seemed out of place. His dark skin color indicated that he, or more likely his ancestors, came from a much more southerly latitude. Now he has lost his life in a cold, ruthless and largely unknown winter war far north along the border between Iraq and Iran.

The six and one-half-year-old Gulf war between the two neighbor states has largely been fought farther south. And for this reason the outside world has formed an image of a war in hot, dirty, swampy areas.

But the front stretches 1200 kilometers from the Gulf, north through a huge changing terrain to the wild and snow-covered mountains of Kurdistan, where Iraq, Iran and Turkey meet, and where the latest of Iran's four offensives of this winter was carried out. Apparently with great success.

The leadership of shiite Muslim Iran has named these four offensives after the holy city Karbala in southern Iraq, the place where one of the shiites' greatest heroic figures, Imam Husayn, suffered martyrdom in the year 680, and is buried. Operations Karbala Four and Five were carried out in December and January aimed at the Iraqi port city of Basra in the south. Karbala Six took place on the central front in February. And on March 4 the Iranians launched Karbala Seven, a push toward the west, farther into the mountains from the area around Haj Umran, a short distance across the Iraqi border.

"Our objective is to crush the enemy's forces," explained the operation leader, Colonel Amir Azarfur, who is the commander of the 64th Iranian Infantry Corps in a briefing which he gave in his headquarters near the town of Piranshahr, only one mile from the border.

And in that limited section of the front where Operation Karbala Seven was conducted that is just what Colonel Azarfur's forces did. Under extremely difficult circumstances.

Key Position

King Winter has taken a firm grip on this area during recent months. Sometimes the snow drifts are several meters high on Gerdmand Mountain and the operation's main objective, Hill 2519--the number is the height of the peak in meters above sea level. That is far from being the highest peak in the Kurdistan mountains, but it is a key position from which there is a good overview of the area, and one can see right down on the Iraqi town of Rawanduz and the main road through the town.

Colonel Azarfur would not say from where the operation began in relation to the border between the two countries. But judging from the operational map and the terrain it began in the Haj Umran area, a short distance on the Iraqi side of the border. From there the Iranians fought upward, meter by meter, until on the night of 4 March--18 hours after the operation began--they took Hill 2519.

There is no doubt that this was skillful professional soldier work. The colonel said that the soldiers under his command had been specially trained and equipped for winter warfare.

He would not say how many men were involved. But he said he was confronted by six infantry brigades supported by 10 artillery battalions--a maximum of 15,000 soldiers. Normally that would require an attacking force to have three times as many men, up to 50,000. But there is no indication that the Iranians had that many--it was primarily fighting morale and skill that brought about the outcome.

Iraqi Flight

Fighting morale was not, however, the same on the Iraqi side. Reporters who in January visited the scene of operations of Karbala Five in the Basra area could tell about Iraqi units who had clearly left their positions in haste and panic at the first sign of enemy activity. That is an impression which was

confirmed on the northern front and strengthened by the fact that the Iraqis abandoned eight entirely intact and undamaged tanks.

The major who led the attack against the hill itself, and who prefers to remain nameless, believes that the Iraqis lost a total of 3,000 dead and wounded during this operation. That is a figure which is impossible to confirm, even if one should wander around the area in an attempt to count the Iraqis who still lie on the battlefield. And such wandering would be very dangerous, although the war activity was very low on the day we visited the area, probably because of the nasty weather. The nearest Iraqi observation post was on a mountainside about 500 meters to the west. At the same time there are still many mines and unexploded grenades around the area.

The major's description of the fighting, other Iranian information and observation of the place indicate that the Iranians fought along an axis which largely followed a narrow and fragile mountain road leading to the top, followed by solid bulldozers which widened the road and cleared it for the following soldiers, vehicles and equipment. There were still about a dozen bulldozers hard at work making improvements which would help the Iranians' chances of retaining control of the captured area.

There were many indications that the fighting in this mountain area marked the end of major Iranian winter offensives--the government in Teheran had in advance announced that the "final offensive" would be over before the Persian new year, which will be celebrated this coming weekend.

But there was no sign that these offensives had brought any significant change in the relations between these two countries, or any final breakthrough for the Iranians. The Gulf war will continue for an indefinite time, neither of the parties intend to give up, both have the resources to keep going for years and the fight for Hill 2519 is still not over.

What does it all mean? Did the capture of this outpost have any purpose in the big picture?

From the Iranian viewpoint the answer is a resounding yes. Hill 2519 was not just a tactical, but also a strategic and political goal.

One of the main objectives of the Iranians is to remove President Saddam Hussein and his regime in Baghdad. It is clear that Iran's ability to keep mounting new offensives, keep on tolerating significant losses of men and material, continued will to fight, are a source of deep concern and increasing demoralization within Iraqi ranks. As seen from Teheran, therefore, every square meter of Iraqi soil captured represents another nail in the coffin of the Baghdad regime.

The area on Iraq's northern front has also a more immediate significance. In the first place it is the center of the Kurdish minority's long armed opposition against the Iraqi authorities. This opposition continues now according to Colonel Azarfur at the same time as the Iranian offensives, even though he emphasized that there is no coordination or direct cooperation.

In the second place the Iranians are now only about 10 miles from the Iraqi provincial capital of Kirkuk, the center of the country's important oil industry. Every Iranian advance further south and west must be just as worrisome to the authorities in Baghdad as the situation at Basra in the south.

Seen against that background, Hill 2519 is perhaps considerably more important than the first glance would indicate. But that is scant consolation to those who lost life and limbs here, and for the thousands who are still fighting and dying in a meaningless and seemingly endless war.

9287

CSO:3639/26

IQBAL AHMAD KAHN DISCUSS VARIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES

Islamabad HURMAT in Urdu 7-14 Mar 87 pp 8-14

[Interview with Iqbal Ahmad Khan by HURMAT panel; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] Mr Iqbal Ahmad Khan is a federal minister as well as the secretary general of Pakistan's ruling party, the Pakistan Muslim League [PML]. He is the second most important person after the prime minister in the present cabinet. All other ministers depend on his directions and advice. His responsibilities are much more important and varied than other ministers. The fact is that the responsibility to reorganize the Muslim League which was given him cannot be handled by any other person. He is working around the clock to finish this difficult and important project creditably. He is a Muslim Leaguer first and last and considers reestablishing the Muslim League as the most respected party in the country his foremost duty. He is the first federal minister to travel faraway and to poverty-stricken areas like Makran. He did not only reorganize the PML there, but also took interest in problems faced by the residents of the area. He visited the offices of HURMAT when he returned from his tour and shared his impressions about the tour and candidly commented on various issues in the country. His interview with the HURMAT panel composed of Zahid Malik, Ibn Ismail, and Iftkhar Nazir, is given below.

[Question] You have just returned from a trip to Sind and Baluchistan. What are some of your impressions from this trip?

[Answer] My trip to Sind was limited to Karachi. The situation in Karachi was so bad that as a federal minister I felt that I must visit the effected areas and meet with the people and learn about their problems. Prime Minister Junejo, who is also president of the PML, had instructed me to meet with the people in Karachi and find out how the government can help solve their problems. Thus, I visited Qasba Colony, Aligarh Colony, Bangash Colony, Pak Colony, and all the other effected areas. I met with my brothers and sisters there and discussed their problems with them, inspected rehabilitation work, and reviewed their complaints. Everyone agreed that there was no racial, factional or regional strife among them. These horrible incidents resulted from the efforts of Pakistan's enemies and foreign agents. There were heavy loses of life and property and various groups living there had begun to hate each other. I made some efforts to establish harmony among these groups and also to reimburse them for the losses they had suffered. I noticed that the

Sind government was doing sizable rehabilitative work. Houses that were burned were being repaired by the government, and arrangements were being made to help people who had lost their family members. Of course, we cannot return the dead to life. The only thing we can do is to give sympathy and monetary assistance to the bereaved. I have also appealed to Muslim League workers to help the people there. Dowries that were burned are being replaced from the Muslim League fund. I felt that all these efforts had improved the situation greatly and things were becoming almost normal. People are gaining their peace of mind back. They are members of the Muslim League and they are also Muhajirs. They took active part in the movement demanding a separate country for the Muslims. They suffered to help establish Pakistan. Even today, they are the strongest supporters of the ideology on which Pakistan was established and Pakistan itself. They want to see Pakistan as a strong country with a stable government. They expressed this feeling when they saw me, the secretary general of the Muslim League. People gathered in large numbers wherever they saw me. These crowds were composed of our sisters, mothers, parents, and children. They assured me that they will cooperate with the Muslim League to normalize the situation. I believe that my visit to Karachi has helped the situation very much. The situation is still far from normal, however, the Sind government is working hard under the leadership of Ghaush Ali Shah, the chief minister, to curb the foreign agents and miscreants. These efforts will not only help make the situation in Karachi normal, but also will enhance the image of the Muslim League in Karachi. Chief Minister Ghaush Ali Shah's efforts are commendable. He is an old Muslim Leaguer and is working as a true Pakistani to establish peace in Karachi and Sind.

[Question] What are your impressions of your recent visit to Baluchistan?

[Answer] This trip was on behalf of the party. I have visited Baluchistan three times since I became the secretary general of the Muslim League. I visited Makran which is the most underdeveloped area of our country. Our political parties have always neglected this area. Nobody ever has thought about the problems in this area. There are serious problems in the areas of education and health besides scarcity of drinking water. Sick persons have to travel far to visit a doctor and at times they die en route. There are no roads or public transportation. Camel is the only mode of transportation. At times, they have to wait for 4 days before a dead is buried because water to bathe it is brought from several miles. There are no schools for hundreds of miles. In short, residents of Makran are suffering badly, however, they are still very patriotic and love Pakistan dearly. They are waiting for someone to come and solve their problems. God sent me there. I organized the local Muslim League party there and gathered information about the problems faced by people. I made several recommendations to Prime Minister Junejo. He has ordered construction of Akra Dam which has been under consideration for a long time to solve the drinking water problem. This project will cost 1.7 million rupees and the prime minister has released 0.7 million rupees already. He has given orders to complete this dam within 2 years. This dam will not only solve the drinking water shortage, but also provide irrigation facilities. There is no electricity there. Efforts are being made to generate electricity and dig wells. Tubewells and generators given to us by some friendly countries were stored in Quetta for a long time. I talked with the chief minister of Baluchistan and he took some quick action. He ordered that those machines be

sent to Semi and Gowadar while I was still there. What I am trying to say is that the present government is determined to solve the people's problems. My trip to Makran not only helped establish a Muslim League branch, but also started development activities there.

[Question] In what phase is the organizational work of the Muslim League now?

[Answer] The membership drive for the party is almost finished. We are in the phase of holding elections at all levels. Most of the political parties appoint their leaders in our country. The Muslim League believes in democratic system and is going to follow it not only in government, but also in the party structure. Leaders of many parties talk about establishing a democracy in the country but do not follow any democratic system in their own parties. They establish a party and want to be its "lord and protector" for life. Their sons or daughters takeover after they die. The 80-year history of Muslim League clearly shows that it never has been the property of one person or a family. This is a party of the people and officers are elected after a specific period according to its constitution. This tradition of electing officers is still being followed. We are trying to hold elections at all levels of the party by the end of March 1987.

[Question] Do you think that the present movement to use representatives will provide the basic cadre to your party?

[Answer] Yes. We have established a system of having representatives at village and ward levels. Primary branches of the party have been established. These primary units will hold elections during the next 4 weeks. The final phase will be completed by the end of March.

[Question] Are there any plans to separate government and party positions at the federal and provincial levels during these elections?

[Answer] All positions in the Muslim League are filled by elections and every member has a right to run for these positions. Various councils will have to decide whether to separate government and party positions or keep them as they are now. I am not in position to say what will happen in this regards.

[Question] According to government statements published in newspapers, the present government is very active in eradicating graft and corruption, however, we have yet to see any concrete action in this area.

[Answer]] I want to tell you that we are very serious about this issue. The prime minister has decided that if a government officer is found guilty of taking bribes, he will be given very severe punishment regardless of his position. Recently a committee composed of assembly members has been established under the leadership of Lt Gen (Retd) Abdul Hameed Malik. This committee has been asked to investigate various departments and identify corrupt employees. The recommendations made by this committee will be followed through honestly. Please give us some time and let us establish a regular constitutional government. We have been in power only for 1 year and have been busy solving other problems. All work will progress gradually. The germs of this disease are spread very wide and it has been here for the last 40 years.

It will take some time and a lot of hard work to cure this chronic illness. Please do not be disappointed. Someone has to do this work. We have decided, God willing, to totally destroy this illness.

[Question] The way some Muslim League members of the National Assembly criticized some Muslim League ministers during the recent session made some observers think that there is a division among the ranks in your party. Will you please comment on this?

[Answer] I did not see anything to worry about such development. I consider this a good thing that the Muslim League assembly members take the activities of our ministers into account. Some people could call it a lack of discipline because we did not have a democratic government here for a long time. We are trying to establish a real democracy and should be given some flexibility in following it. People who have been elected to government without participation in any party will take some time getting used to this system.

[Question] Can you suggest something to reduce the tension between the president and the prime minister?

[Answer] This is all imaginary. Both the president and the prime minister are busy making the present democratic government stable and they have no differences. The democratic government established last year is the result of the efforts of these two people. They are both using the rights given them by the constitution without interfering with each other.

As for the joke called the "mini parliament." This rumor was started by the enemies of the present government system. The president himself has said that if a suggestion was made by the advisory group that was not within his authority, he will forward that to the prime minister. This proves that the present government is working according to the constitution and there is no rift between the president and the prime minister.

[Question] The group in this "parliament" that made the suggestion to hold mid-term elections was composed of retired military officers or bureaucrats who were and are supporters of President Zia. It is believed that they were echoing his desire.

[Answer] I do not think it is appropriate to call this demand a desire of President Zia. I do not deny that this group was composed of people who were part of the martial law machinery of President Zia. All I can say is that they began to worry about a democracy when they had lost their authority. However, when they were in power, they never gave a thought about it. My honest opinion is that these people are not politicians and do not know what would happen if we hold mid-term elections, therefore, they just made this suggestion to become popular.

[Question] What possibilities are there of holding mid-term elections?

[Answer] We had only two or three general elections in our country during the last 40 years and each of these elections failed because the political parties that failed to win the elections produced an atmosphere that made the elected

assemblies' work impossible. Rejection of these elections resulted in dire consequences for the nation. True, political parties were not allowed to participate in the last elections, but there was no restriction on politicians. Anyhow, we did have elections and succeeded in eliminating the martial law regime from our country. The power was transferred to people's elected representatives. It is said that the 1970 elections were objective and democratic. We do agree with it, however, those elections did not result in transfer of power to the people. Instead, our country was divided into two parts. One party did not let the majority party takeover the government. I believe that were the last elections held on party basis, the elected representatives would never have been able to form a government. One of the parties that failed to win the majority would have blocked the majority party getting into power just like it happened in 1970. People who were against the martial law regime were elected into assemblies as the result of holding elections on a non-party basis. These very people also paved the way for recognizing political parties in order to establish a parliamentary democracy here. We do not only have a constitutional government now, but also have given people their basic rights after 25 years of emergency rule. We have told the nation what we will do during the next 4 years. I promise you that this government will hold the next elections as scheduled. The persons who are demanding mid-term elections now are the same who had started the movement to boycott the last elections. The people, however, had ignored them. Should we accept their demand to hold mid-term elections what guarantee do we have that those who lose elections again will be satisfied? If we get stuck with this endless cycle of holding election after election, people will lose faith in the democratic system. We oppose the idea of mid-term elections because we want to establish a tradition of holding elections on a regular schedule.

[Question] Will you allow the People's Party and other political parties that have not registered according to the Political Parties Act to participate in the next general elections?

[Answer] It is the duty of political parties in any country to work according to the law and the constitution. Political parties that do not follow the law are not allowed to participate in elections. Pakistan has a law that requires these parties to register. If a party, regardless of its size, refuses to register I believe that it should not be allowed to participate in any election.

[Question] Are not you stopping a part of our nation from participating in the to participate in the election process?

[Answer] How can you say that? The party which you call the major party of the nation is the one that tried to stop people from participating in the elections in 1985. The facts show that the voters forced all their efforts to fail by showing up in record numbers to vote. The people want a stable democratic government in this country and they want political parties to comply with the laws of the country. The parties that refuse to follow the country's laws cannot claim to support the country.

[Question] Will the municipal elections be held on party or non-party basis?

[Answer] We have not made any decision on this issue. The majority opinion is that since we never had municipal elections on party basis in our country, we should not involve political parties now. They want to keep these basic government units clean from party politics. There are 40,000 municipal representatives in the country and nomination of that many representatives would be difficult for any political party. Anyhow, we have not made the final decision on it.

[Question] Mr Khan, the government has this habit of mentioning the involvement of a "secret hand" whenever there is riot in the country. Why is not this "secret hand" revealed?

[Answer] It is not possible to reveal this "secret hand" until the politicians in our country do not quit their negative attitude. Whenever a riot takes place, our politicians make the situation so complicated that it becomes impossible to identify the real criminals. You know the proverb: "Even thieves yell thief, thief." These politicians have the same attitude. You know they had complicated the incidents involving kidnapping of Benazir's servants and the murder of Fazil Rahu. Instead of helping find the real criminals they blamed the government for these incidents. These politicians muddle up these things like this. For example, when the riots happened in Karachi they said that these could have been avoided by passing the Shariat Bill in time. You can see for yourself that there is no connection between the Shariat Bill and the Karachi riots. These riots were also attributed to not holding elections on party-basis. Brother, this was an activity of terrorists which could have taken place any time and any place. Does not such terrorist activities happen in the United States? There was a bomb explosion in the Capitol building, President Reagan was shot at. All this does not mean that the U.S. government's policies have failed. If our political parties treat terrorist activities this way it is not possible to identify the people behind these incidents. When too many people get involved the real criminals just disappear. People never learn the facts.

[Question] The Muslim League does not encourage student organizations. While the MSF is working other student organizations have been banned. Why is that and why these restrictions on student organizations are not removed?

[Answer] This is a false accusation. The Muslim League has never supported the people working for the MSF. There are other political parties that are very involved in student organizations. The whole political clout of these parties will disappear if they give up their involvement in student organizations. Those parties want to keep the students engrossed in politics to keep their own political identity alive and provide lakhs of rupees and weapons to these organizations. It is not appropriate to remove restrictions imposed on student organizations. Students should focus their whole energy on learning so they are able to fulfill their responsibilities to their nation. Unfortunately, our college hostels have become arsenals. Whenever the government tries to rectify this problem, political parties hinder its efforts. Now that the government has decided to put an end to all these arsenals, some political parties have started to agitate against the government. You must have observed that several political parties with opposing ideologies have united on the issue of student organizations. They want to continue their illegal activities with the help of student organizations. We want these political parties to agree not to disrupt the education of our students.

MQM'S SUCCESS SEEN FORCING POLITICAL PARTIES TO COMPROMISE

Karachi JANG (Supplement) in Urdu 4 Mar 87 p 6

[Article by Mukhtar Aqil: "Changes in People's Party's Policies"]

[Excerpts] The strong rise of the Muhajir movement in urban areas of the province has forced the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] as well as other political parties to change their programs. When Malik Mohammad Qasim, secretary general of the MRD, visited Karachi recently he shared some "secret" information. He said that the wave of the Muhajir movement cannot be stopped; it will, according to him, gain even more momentum. Even Jamaat-e Islami [JI] and Jumiat-e Ulema-e Islam [JUI] have to talk more about the Muhajirs as a political group rather than about the Muhajir movement itself. Malik Qasim is an experienced and wise politician. He became the secretary general of the majority party during the Ayub era and gained a lot of political experience when he became MRD's secretary general. Only a few days after his statement, the JI leadership began to talk about Karachi's rights in addition to their usual rhetoric about Islam and Pakistan. Abdul Sattar Afghani, former JI mayor of Karachi, was arrested demonstrating for "the rights of Karachi." There were posters with the statement made by the former mayor prominently displayed: "I will sacrifice my life for Karachi's rights." JI has all but agreed to join the Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM] through this poster. According to political circles, the arrest of Karachi's former mayor and his councilmen was an effort to show that they were more interested in Karachi's rights rather than the MQM. However, this ploy was not very successful and the former mayor and the 43 former councilmen agreed to be freed on bail. The former mayor attacked the MQM in his press conference after his release. It seemed like his "fight" was more against the MQM than it was against the government. He said that the people will not support those who play politics over dead bodies of Muhajirs. Perhaps this statement made by the wise former mayor is correct. However, the warm welcome that was accorded to MQM's young leader, Iltaf Hussain, and the big rally held in Sakkar asking the Muhajirs to unite show that the wind is blowing in MQM's favor. Even the JI, which has not really recognized the "Muhajir politics," is trying to follow this wind by talking about the rights of Karachi and Hyderabad. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, national chairman of the PPP, has not accepted the "Muhajir nationality," but has expressed his support for the MQM demands as well calling for solving the problems faced by the Muhajirs. Even Jumiat-e Ulema-e Pakistan [JUP], the prominent party of Sind's urban areas, is not willing to go against this tide.

Prof Shah Farid-ul Haq, vice president of JUP, has openly declared that the Muhajir movement is the result of unfair practices carried out by other groups.

Sind's group-politics have strongly influenced religious and national political parties. At the same time, it is helping Khan Abdul Wali Khan's National Awami Party [ANP]. The ANP has announced its plans to raise flags all over Karachi to use this inclination toward nationalism in its favor. Lines of red flags in various parts of the city such as Pathan Colony, Frontier Colony, Pirabad Qasba Colony, De Silva Town, Patel Para, Sabzi Mandi, Sultana Bad, Metrol, Baldia Town, Landi, and Bara Board indicate this change in the political approach. The ANP made a successful attempt in showing off its role in Sind's politics in a large meeting called to eulogize its slain leader Fazil Rahu. They called a huge political rally in Rahu's home district of Badeen. the chairman of the PPP has also changed its tune according to the change in the tone of Sind's politics. He has not only appointed officers from the Muhajir membership in its national and city offices, but also at division levels. Amir Hayder Kazimi, secretary for information in Sind's PPP, has been promoted to president of the party's Karachi division and secretary for information in the Karachi office, Iqbal Yusuf, is now the state secretary for information. similarly, Fatah Allah Usmani, Riza Rubani (Karachi), and Mohammad Hussain Dhanji have been made members of the party's provincial council. Miss Benazir Bhutto had announced the provincial organization of the party in March 1986. On her return from London, she replaced Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi with Makhdum Khaliq Alazman as the party president on 5 May. After the failure of the 14 August movement and because of some "disagreements," Mr Alazman had resigned from his position. Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani was made the temporary president. He has been appointed president again after the reorganization was completed. Sayyed Parvez Ali Shah was appointed Sind's senior vice president and Karachi division's president, Abdul Islam Thaem was appointed the president of Hyderabad division, and Manzur Hussain Vasan was appointed Sind's deputy secretary general.

According to political circles, Miss Bhutto appointed Muhajirs to these important positions to counter the complaints made about the Muhajirs against political parties. These appointments will be used to control the flow of urban politics. The JI is also trying very hard to attain this goal. People were surprised at the attitude taken by Abdul Sattar Afghani, a JI leader and the former mayor of Karachi, over the issue of urban rights. The former mayor said, "My struggle is neither personal, nor is for JI, the Muslim League or the Islamic ideology. I am fighting for the rights of Karachi's citizens. I wanted to make the efforts of those factionalists who were encouraging murder and arson in the name of racial identities useless. They had increased the 'lines of tombs' in the city." The former mayor also spoke about supporting the permission for Bangla Desh residents to come to Pakistan. He said that it was not fair not to accept Biharis as Pakistanis. Abdul Sattar Afghani, while giving more importance to Karachi's problems over JI and the implementation of Islamic ideology, clearly indicated that Karachi's rights were becoming a priority issue. He also challenged the MQM and asked where were these supporters of Karachi when people were being killed in Ali Garh Colony? Why were their guns silent at that time? Where was the MQM when Biharis were called beggars? He was the one who went to Orangi at that time

and later met with President Zia along with Afaq Shahid and other supporters to ask permission for bringing Biharis to Pakistan. Azim Ahmad Taraq, the chairman of MQM, replied to the former mayor's accusations. He said that Karachi's problems, including the vehicle tax, have been accumulating for the last 40 years and nobody had paid any attention to these problems. The JI had even participated in the government during this period and has controlled Karachi Municipal Corporation for the last 8 years. All this time it had kept a criminal silence. He added that political parties have been hurt by the popular support that the MQM has received. These parties have joined against the MQM now. Azim Ahmad Taraq added that MQM's leader, Iltaf Hussain, was arrested along with assembly members Afaq Shahid and Haseeb Hashimi while demonstrating for moving Bangla Desh Biharis to Pakistan at the Quaid-e Azam's tomb on 14 August 1979. He was sentenced to 9 months in jail and five lashes. He had served the full jail term even though he was allowed to go earlier. About the accusations levied by the former mayor, he said that the MQM had done most of the work to help the riot-stricken areas of Orangi Town, Qasba Colony, and Aligarh Colony. At that time the JI had remained silent and even had walked out of 12 political party meeting held at the residence of Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi. They even defended the people who had devastated Muhajir colonies with the help of money from some movie star while under the influence of drugs.

This exchange between the former "father of Karachi," Abdul Sattar Afghani and the present "son of Karachi," Azim Ahmad Taraq, shows the new developments in Sind's urban politics that has resulted from the MQM emergence and its holding large political rallies. Iltaf Hussain, the leader of the MQM, is touring Sind these days and the welcome that he received in Hyderabad and other areas reminds us of the welcome that Benazir Bhutto had received in April and May of 1986. Iltaf Hussain has not only been welcomed by the Muhajirs but also by other groups. Pakhtoon brotherhood prepared and read a pamphlet in a large rally during his visit to Hyderabad. This pamphlet said, "If Muhajirs welcome Iltaf Hussain, then we will welcome him along with them!" Iltaf Hussain read that pamphlet in a public meeting and added, "I respect their feelings. We will hold with love any hand extended with love. We will never let anyone complain. Sindhis are also our brothers; we have to live on the same piece of land." Iltaf Hussain told the audience that after the feelings of deprivation and insecurity are gone these group politics will also disappear. He added that a strong one-nation image of Pakistan will emerge only when there is fair division of rights.

The MQM has emerged as a powerful catalyst in Sind's urban politics. It has challenged all the established political parties and they are now fighting for their survival. Our countrymen have become merciless because the regime that came into power after the 5 July 1977 martial law had ignored its promises to them and forgotten their sacrifices. The movement to betray trust was started by the government and the politicians. Now the people have the upper hand. The future of political parties depends on how they work to regain the people's trust.

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